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CHRISTIAN MORALS

ARTHUR JAMES HUMPHREYS

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CHRISTIAN MORALS

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PREFACE

THIS little book is only meant to be a guide and companion to fuller studies. It is intended primarily as a text-book for those who are approaching the subject of Christian Morals in connection with the Service Candidates' Scheme for those preparing for Holy Orders. It is hoped, however, that the subject will be seen to be of such importance that it will be taken up in many of our schools and colleges, and it would be of great advantage if the subject could be discussed by Study Circles in the churches.

The author will be only too glad if this little book gives an impetus to the study of a subject that is so important for the Kingdom of God.

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CHRISTIAN MORALS

PART I

THE FOUNDATION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. *Importance of the Subject.* The subject of Christian Morals is one of increasing importance to the Christian disciple to-day. The Faith has been assailed in the past mainly from the rationalistic side, and as late as 1874 Dean Wace, in his Boyle Lectures on *Christianity and Morality*, could say: "The substantial acceptance by our opponents of the moral teaching of Christianity affords us a common ground" (p. 8). No such common agreement on moral questions can be found to-day. Christianity is being assailed from its ethical side, and new theories of morals are being propounded and eagerly caught up by men who are looking for new foundations of society. Even within the Church itself there is a good deal of doubt as to what are the moral foundations of the Faith.

2. "*Has Christianity Failed?*" The results of Christianity seem to many to have been bitterly disappointing. Society is everywhere in a state of upheaval and discontent, and in the time of a great war and of colossal disturbances the Christian Church seems to have had no message. "Has Christianity failed?" and if so, "Why has it failed?" have been

the questions on men's lips. It is therefore incumbent upon the Christian disciple of to-day to ask whether Christianity still has a message to guide the nations in their perplexity, whether the claim of Christ to be "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" is justified. It is primarily moral guidance that men need. Christianity may be able to hold its own in the realm of abstract thought, but if the doctrines of Christianity have no moral power, men ask: "What is the use of them?"

3. *What are the Moral Principles of Christianity?* We need therefore to ask afresh: "What are the moral principles of our Faith?" It may be that they have been imperfectly apprehended; that the professing Christian has not lived up to his principles; and that the accusations levelled to-day against Christianity are the fault, not of Christianity, but of the Christian disciples who have not lived up to the level of their profession. Humbly we must acknowledge how far short we have all come of our high calling, and if it is through our fault that the name of Christ is blasphemed to-day among the nations, we must seek to reinstate His name, and learn to know His will more fully, that so, by more true obedience, we may glorify His Name among men.

4. *Faith and Works.* It may be that the Church has been so busy defending its Creed that we have neglected too much its practical side. "Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas. ii. 17). Since the time of the Reformation the Church has perhaps been too much pre-occupied with the intellectual side of faith, and our conduct has not kept pace with our thought. We have emphasised the necessity of exact statements of faith. We have been keen to detect the very first beginnings of heresy. We have made a fetish of our liturgy and organisation. But, "though I understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and have not love, I am nothing" (1 Cor. xiii. 2).

5. *Moral Power of the Primitive Church.* The primitive Church prevailed because it was pre-eminent in moral power. The lives of the early Christians were

the greatest recommendation of their faith. Gibbon, in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (chap. xv.), gives as one of the chief causes for the growth of Christianity that "the primitive Christian demonstrated his faith by his virtues." The early apologists are never tired of depicting the reformation of manners which was introduced into the world by the preaching of the Gospel. We, with all our array of creeds and doctrines, with all our wealth and education, with all our historic prestige and dignity, can scarcely make the same appeal to-day, and consequently have not the same influence in the world. Why is it that our lives so often belie our faith, and create a prejudice in the minds of honest, thinking men against everything that the Church stands for? Is it because, in all our interest in right doctrine, we have neglected far too much the moral rightness which alone can justify religion in the eyes of men?

6. *Pressing Questions.* No subject is therefore more important to-day than that of Christian morals. What is the Christian ideal, for the individual, and for society? In what way does the Christian Faith help us? Is its moral teaching different from that of other religions? Is it better? Has it value for the world of the twentieth century, or has it grown obsolete? What is to be the prime motive of our conduct? What is the power by which the ideal may be achieved? These are some of the questions that we must face, some of the things to which the world of to-day is demanding an answer. On our answer depends, humanly speaking, the future of the Church and of Christianity itself. May the Holy Spirit give us vision and power that both by our lives and teaching we may "justify the ways of God to men."

CHAPTER II

SCOPE OF THE SUBJECT

7. *Definition.* Christian Morals may be defined as the practical side of the Christian Faith. Its scope therefore is as wide as Christian conduct. "Let us learn," said Ignatius in the second century, "to live according to Christianity." "We do not speak great things," said Minucius Felix, "we live them." Perhaps the best definition of our subject are the words of St. John (1 John iv. 19–21): "We love, because He first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."

8. *Ethics and Morals.* Christian Ethics, according to the definition of Rabiger,[1] is "the science of the moral life determined by the Spirit of God." If ethics is the science of the moral life, morals may be called the art. It is not possible to preserve an absolute distinction between these terms, for every ethical treatise deals with the practice as well as with the theory of virtue; but the word "morals" is chosen more especially to emphasise the practical, rather than the theoretical side of "ethics." [2]

9. *Christian Morals and other Systems.* In this work the truth of the main ideas of the Christian Faith is assumed. In a general treatise on ethics the whole subject of morality has to be treated from its first

[1] Quoted in Bruce: *Ethics of the Old Testament*, p. 9.

[2] For the root meanings of these words, see note in Murray: *Handbook of Christian Ethics*, p. 261.

dawning in the human consciousness, and the validity of conscience and of the moral ideas must be investigated from the foundation. Ethics thus leads up to a philosophical theory which can be then used as the basis of practice. In Christian Ethics the philosophical basis is given, and we can at once begin to build up the superstructure. But we shall understand the Christian system better if we compare it constantly with other systems, and especially those built on definite foundations such as Materialism, or the non-Christian religions. It is in such comparisons as these that light is thrown on the distinctive principles of Christian morals.

10. *Philosophy and Psychology.* Ethics is often called moral philosophy and is a necessary part of philosophic investigation. As was seen, however, in the last paragraph, Christian morals has its philosophical basis already assumed. We do not need to work out a metaphysical theory of the ultimate nature of the world, as the old philosophers did. The scientific explanation of the world may not yet be complete, but a Christian believes that he knows enough of the character of the Power behind phenomena to warrant him in building up a sure system of morality. He assumes that God is the ultimate Source, and that in Jesus Christ we have received the revelation of the express Word of the Father. In putting this faith into action, the Christian claims that his experience that Christianity harmonises with the natural order of things goes a long way to substantiate the truth of his faith. "He that doeth the will shall know of the doctrine."

Psychology—the science of the mind—is very important to a right understanding of the operations of the human mind, but from our point of view it need only be referred to for the light it throws upon Christian ideas.

11. *Morals and Dogma.* Though Christian doctrine is to be regarded as the basis of Christian morals, this does not mean that they may not constantly interact upon each other. There is a constant development

in Christian doctrine as the mind grows in understanding, and our apprehension of truth depends very largely upon our moral insight. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 14). "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John xv. 14; cp. vii. 17; xiv. 26). Dogmas have at times been taught against which a truer moral insight has revolted. In the Old Testament times the revelation of God was undoubtedly mediated mainly through the deepening moral insight of the prophets and saints, and what happened in the Old Testament times has certainly happened also in the history of the Christian Church. Men cannot believe a doctrine which conflicts with their moral sense. The doctrine of the Atonement, for instance, has been overlaid at times with ideas against which a later age has revolted, and it has been the same with the doctrines concerning predestination, free-will, purgatory, hell, and eternal torment. The Holy Spirit guides us into deeper apprehensions of truth mainly by means of the conscience. Therefore, though we take the main teachings of the Christian Faith for granted, this does not mean that there is no possibility of such re-interpretation from time to time of old dogmas as is found necessary in the light of new truth, however revealed.

12. *Sociology, Economics, and Politics.* Morality is the principle that is to be applied in every department of life. It touches therefore all the sciences and the arts. But the distinction is clear. The sociologist will map out all the details of the organisation of society, the economist of trade, the politician of the state. It is theirs to study the relation of causes and effects in detail. The moralist will bring a principle to be applied. That principle may bring out the best results that the sociologist can wish for, but the moralist urges it, not because he has worked out the details and found that it is the best policy, but because he is sure that it is the right policy and must be made to work. Ultimately, he believes that the right will coincide with the best working policy, but the moralist

cannot prove it, and the immediate results may often seem to be very far from the best. The highest morality always walks by faith, and not by sight.

13. *Æsthetics.* We speak of the beauty of character, and the love of beauty seems to be in many ways closely akin to the love of goodness. "We needs must love the highest when we see it." There are some who deny that the feeling after beauty in nature, in art, in music, or in literature, has anything to do with morality, and who assert that the highest beauty, *e. g.* in music, is often the furthest removed from morality. It is a question whether the feeling after beauty and goodness are not ultimately akin. Certainly ugliness hurts very much as the sight of a vicious man, and every language is full of metaphors which liken depravity to ugliness and virtue to beauty. But though the connection between ethics and æsthetics may be ultimately very close, in common use their respective spheres are easy to be distinguished.

BOOKS

For general study of the whole subject consult:
Newman Smyth: *Christian Ethics.*
Martensen: *Christian Ethics.* 3 vols.
Murray: *Handbook of Christian Ethics.*
W. L. Davidson: *Christian Ethics.*
Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics—Arts. "Ethics and Morality," "Marriage," "Family," etc.

CHAPTER III

THE GROWTH OF MORAL IDEAS

14. *Is Morality Stationary or Progressive?* (*a*) Buckle, in his *History of Civilisation*, said: "There is unquestionably nothing to be found in the world which has undergone so little change as those great dogmas on which moral systems are based. The essentials of morals have been known for thousands of years, and not one jot or one tittle has been added to them by all the sermons, homilies, and text-books which moralists and theologians have been able to produce." To him there is no progress in moral truths.

History does not support this position, and it would mean that Christianity indicates no real moral progress. History shows that there has been real progress in understanding, though it is true to say that the advance has been along a definite line.

15. (*b*) Another school of thought makes Christianity absolutely original and unique, a system of thought revealed once for all to man in complete form. It is no disparagement of the Christian Faith to show that many of its greatest truths were foreshadowed and anticipated before Christ came. "God did not leave Himself without witness" (Acts xiv. 17). St. Paul taught us to think of Christianity as the culmination of the providential guiding of God. Christ came in "the fullness of time," and He came "not to destroy, but to fulfil" (Matt. v. 17). Both in the heathen world and among the Jews we find a reaching towards the full ideal of Christianity, and it is by realising how Christ came to fulfil all science, all philosophy, and all the religious teachings of the prophets and seers of every

race, that we begin to see His real and necessary place in the scheme of the world.

16. (*c*) Just as we have learned to perceive an evolution in the natural and intellectual and religious life of the world, so we shall find that there has been a real evolution in the moral sphere. Christianity claims that in Christ this reached its perfection and climax, though still within the Church there is a constant progress in our human understanding, as the Holy Spirit leads us into all truth, into an ever more and more complete realisation of the truth as it is in Christ.

17. *Primitive Morality.* In all primitive societies morality was intimately connected with religion. In ancient Babylonia the Laws of Hammurabi were said to be dictated by Shamash, the Sun-god. One of the most complete codes of morality in the ancient world is found in the Egyptian Book of the Dead. In ancient Greece morality consisted mainly in the recognition of human dependence upon the gods. The laws of morality were regarded as externally imposed on man by the will of the gods, and morality consisted of definite duties to be performed to the gods, to the family, the clan, or the tribe. The progress of morality has been always in the direction (1) of deepening the inwardness of morality, and (2) of widening the extent of its application. The moral ideals have been more and more felt to be rooted in man's nature, a matter not of outward duty only, but of inward motive; and the sphere of morals has widened with the development of the race, until we realise that we have duties to perform not only to the immediate circle of our family and friends, but to every tribe and clan and nation.

18. *Greek Philosophy.* (1) Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. The great philosophical systems of Greek ethics date from the days of Socrates and Plato, when criticism was beginning to undermine the old crude notions of the gods, and morality was placed on the surer foundation of reason. Socrates and Plato believed that morality was the expression of the innate reason in things. It did not take its rise merely from external law, whether of the gods or men; it was inherent in

the very constitution of nature, whether that were explained by Wisdom, Fate, or God.

Aristotle adopted a more scientific method in his exposition of the accepted practical virtues that went to make up a good citizen. Man is a " political being," and his aim is happiness. Happiness is found in the pursuit of virtue. Virtue is the cultivation of the mean between extremes, and Aristotle shows how the mean is to be sought in his exposition of the virtues. To him the political point of view is the only standard for the guidance of the moral judgment, and he has no room for many of the specifically Christian virtues such as humility, resignation, sacrifice, and love. His treatise has been generally accepted as the basis of moral philosophy, and the schoolmen of the Middle Ages modelled their system on the Aristotelian method. It is still the method of the statesman, to whom political considerations are supreme; but though an enormous step forward from anything previously found, it is still a morality confessedly external, and Aristotle was not able to free himself from the haughty Greek attitude to the barbarian world.

19. (2) Epicureans and Stoics. The two later Greek schools differed in their conception of the supreme good.

Epicurus declared that pleasure was the supreme good, in the sense of painlessness for the body, and tranquillity for the soul. Virtue is the best means to this end. The doctrine may be consonant with the pursuit of the very highest kind of virtue, but Epicureanism became easily a refined egoism, which sought a cultivated life of enjoyment withdrawn as much as possible from public activity. It is not surprising that the term later on became used for the pursuit of a much more degraded type of pleasure.

Stoicism was the opposite of this system, and produced many of the finest types of ancient character. Virtue, according to the Stoic, was to be pursued for its own sake. It was the only good, and brought its own happiness. Virtue was to live in harmony with nature, and the wise man found the true way of unity with nature in the service of his fellows. Yet he sought

to crush his feelings, and to cultivate a wise indifference or "apathy," doing the duty that lay immediately before him, but neither weeping with them that weep, nor rejoicing with them that do rejoice. All such sentimentality was weakness unworthy of the offspring of the gods. The importance of the Stoics for the student of Christian morals lay in their earnest religious tone, and their cosmopolitan ideal. In their distinction between the perfect standard of the wise man and the common duties of the ordinary citizen, they laid the basis of that doctrine of a double standard of morality which afterwards passed into the Church as ordinary duty and "counsels of perfection."

20. *Roman Morality.* Rome cannot be said to have had a peculiar philosophy of its own. Its genius was practical, and its philosophy mainly transplanted from the Greeks. Stoicism, with its earnestness and severity, was the system that became most popular among the Romans, under the influence of Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius. With regard to the three latter it is an open question how far they may have been influenced by the spread of Christian ideas.

21. (*a*) Cicero. With Cicero the basis of morality is nature, and the aim of the wise man "to live in accordance with nature." As man is the highest point of nature, so it behoves the good man to cultivate the excellence peculiar to humanity, and his chief virtue will be that of "humanity" or "benevolence," with a view to the practical benefit of mankind. Cicero attempted to give a religious basis to morality, and it is only the splendour of his rhetoric which obscures for us the real weakness of his position. The pantheistic tendency of the time in religion could afford no real power. The principles of the Stoics could never get rid of their aristocratic tendency; they were only possible for the few—the aristocracy of the wise.

22. (*b*) Seneca. Seneca wrote largely on moral subjects, and is thought by some to have influenced St. Paul in many of his precepts. It is also possible that the influence may have been in the other direction. Seneca develops the Stoic ideal of cosmopoli-

tanism, and emphasises the power of the religious sentiment. But the religion that he could supply was only an abstraction, from which there could spring no power.

23. (*c*) Epictetus. Epictetus still more strongly emphasised the need for religion. All men to him are the offspring of God, and man's duty therefore is to the whole world. But he falls short of the active morality of the Christian in his emphasis on resignation. "Bear and forbear" is his last word; but how far short is this of the ideal of self-sacrificing love!

24. (*d*) Marcus Aurelius. The last and finest expression of Stoicism is found in the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 172–5). It is the record of the wise man's withdrawal of himself into the inner chamber of his own soul. "It suffices to live alone with the divinity in one's own self, and to serve it uprightly." The book is full of fine moral precepts with reference to our duty to one another, but one cannot but feel the self-centredness of the whole outlook. If circumstances forbid that the good man can live according to his own ideals, better is it for him to make an end of life.

What wonder that Stoicism finally issued in utter cynicism, and exchanged its attitude of independence to one of utter indifference to human society! The old world was dying for want of a real religion, a Gospel that might have power to transform ideals into acts.

25. (*e*) The Ineffectiveness of Philosophy. One has only to turn to any description of life in the Roman Empire in the first century A.D. to see how ineffective were all the precepts of the pagan moralists upon the life of the people. Lecky, in his *History of European Morals*, says, "The Roman religion, even in its best days, though an admirable system of moral discipline, was never an independent source of moral enthusiasm." St. Paul's description of the heathen world in Rom. i. 18–32 seems not a whit too severe when we compare the accounts of Roman life in Juvenal or in Gibbon.

26. *Buddhist Morality.* The religion of Buddha (*c.* 560 B.C.) is fundamentally not a religion, but

philosophy. It is founded on pessimism, and the desire to escape from life. Buddha preached four fundamental principles: (1) That all life is suffering; (2) That it is desire which perpetuates life, and therefore suffering, in a constant series of reincarnations; (3) Therefore all desire must be annihilated; (4) The way to annihilate desire is to follow "the noble eight-fold path" of right behaviour towards one's neighbour and towards oneself. Many of the precepts in this "noble eight-fold path" seem at first sight to be distinctly Christian, but the first principles of Buddhism have to be borne in mind if we are to judge its precepts aright. Its whole aim is redemption, not from sin, but from suffering; and its ideal is Nirvana, which at any rate comes very near to being extinction. And though the ideal of practical virtue is very high, it is to be remembered that knowledge is not power, and that in the few places, such as Burmah and Tibet, where Buddhism is still found the least mixed with other cults, we find merely a lifeless, mechanical ceremonialism, side by side with the lowest levels of morality and culture.

27. *Hindu Morality.* A great deal of what has just been said applies also to Hinduism. In recent times, when there has been an attempt to revive Hinduism in opposition to Christianity, it has been claimed that all the Christian virtues can be found in the Vedic writings, but it must be said that the claim would scarcely be upheld by critical analysis. Hinduism is founded on pantheism, but has become a medley of beliefs, some of them probably introduced from Christianity. The doctrine of Karma, by which the inequalities in life are explained as the result of a previous incarnation, lies at the root of Hindu morality. But a system which is founded on an inexorable law such as this, coupled with pantheism, may strengthen the attitude of fatalistic resignation, but is not one in which there can be any true morality. There is no room in Hinduism for free-will, or repentance, or forgiveness. All is God, and moral distinctions, properly speaking, have no existence.

28. *Confucian Morality.* As a practical system of morality, Confucianism is one of the best. It must be borne in mind that Confucianism is not properly a religion. The religion of China is found in its Buddhism and Taoism, and most Chinese people profess to be followers of all three systems. Taoism might be said to be the cult, Buddhism the philosophy, and Confucianism the practice of the Chinese people. Confucius was confessedly an agnostic—he could not say whether there was a God or not, and he was doubtful of a future life. But for practical purposes, and for the well-being of the State, it was good that there should be a recognised uniform code, to regulate one's relations with the family and the State. Law and order, piety towards one's parents, and loyalty towards the State, made for happiness and peace. That was the law of things. As for any ultimate sanction to morality, Confucius was content to leave that on one side. His morality was purely political and external. He was a pragmatist. The result justified the course. Order was at any rate the best course for this life. As for another—well, it did not seem to make any great difference to one's present conduct.

It is this agnostic basis that is the weakness of Confucianism. Its strength lies in the force of tradition and custom. But philosophically it is pure utilitarianism, and the result of utilitarianism is merely enlightened selfishness. It is lacking in the inner motive. It possesses no real sanction. It cannot appeal to the heart of man. It has no sense of sin. Hence Confucianism is lacking in the power of moral regeneration. It has no strength to enforce its own ideals. Its face is ever to the past. It has no gospel for the future. It is merely a system of customary law. It cannot inspire with new vision. It is unchanging, and therefore lifeless. The history of China is the reflex of its creed.

29. *Japanese Morality.* What has been said of China applies with equal force to Japan, except that Shintoism there takes the place of Confucianism as the State system. It is practical, political, and external.

The awakening of Japan has not been due to any inherent force in its old systems, but solely to the influx of Western ideas, including Christianity. Much of the education of modern Japan has been due, directly or indirectly, to the schools of the Christian missionaries.

30. *Mohammedan Morality.* In order of time, Mohammedan morality would naturally fall to be considered after Christianity. But it is confessedly rather in the line of Judaism, of which it professes to be the completion, than in that of Christianity, to which it was always opposed, and of which Mohammed was largely ignorant. The references to Christianity in the Koran show that Mohammed had only heard of it in a very corrupt form, and he is ignorant of some of its fundamental dogmas. But even with regard to Judaism, Mohammed was not well informed, and his religion is to be regarded rather as a reform of the old Semitic religions than as the direct outcome of Judaism. It is therefore convenient to treat it first along with the other Eastern religions, rather than after the religion of the Jews.

31. The primal thought of Mohammedanism is the unity and supremacy of God. His will is supreme, and the only attitude for men is submission. The word "Islam" means "submission," and those who submit to His will are called "Moslems." Morality in this system is obedience. We obey because God is the Supreme Ruler, the Almighty One, not because we understand, or can understand. It is obedience to a declared law, a Divine fiat, rather than loyalty to a principle, a law of the heart. Even if God told us to do what we thought was wrong, it would be right to do it. Might is right. God may be capricious, but we must submit. Right is not our affair, but God's. Hence the only sanction of morality is God's will. Obedience is not interior; motive cannot enter into it. God is great, and we must submit.

32. The morality of Islam does not allow of progress. It is a hard and fast law, to be obeyed in all its literal rigour. It is only in some of the later, heretical sects

that a more mystic doctrine has entered into Mohammedanism, which allows more scope for progress. The orthodox Sunnis do not allow for it. But no form of Mohammedanism can be anything but fatalistic. The later sects are nearer to pantheism, and not so strict in their adherence to the Koran; but pantheism excludes any real morality equally with any doctrine that makes virtue consist only in submission to the Divine decree.

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Lecky : *History of European Morals.*

CHAPTER IV

HEBREW MORALITY

33. *The Basis of Christianity.* From the Christian point of view nothing is more important than a study of Hebrew morality. Our Lord accepted the Old Testament as the record of Divine revelation, and made that the foundation of His teaching. "I came not to destroy, but to fulfil." But the Old Testament standards were not regarded as perfect. "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter the Kingdom of God" (Matt. v. 20). "It was said to you by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; but I say unto you, Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment" (Matt. v. 22). "For the hardness of your hearts Moses gave you this commandment; but I say unto you, Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery" (Mark x. 11).

It is obvious from these sayings that Christ treated the Jewish morality as imperfect and incomplete, and that while He built upon the foundation of Judaism He went beyond it in His teaching, and carried it forward to perfection. It is therefore necessary for the student of Christian morals to enquire in what way Jewish morality was incomplete and imperfect, and in what direction it was added to and amended in the teaching of Christ.

34. *Progressive Revelation.* It is now a generally accepted belief that the Old Testament gives us the record of the progressive revelation of God to the Jewish people. It may be that the nature of the Jewish religion from the beginning was such that there was

latent in it the higher developments that afterwards became manifest. This is implied in the very idea of evolution or development. But there are clear indications of a progress in religious thought from the days of Abraham onwards. The stages of progress may be roughly classified as: (1) the patriarchal period; (2) the legal period; (3) the prophetic period; (4) the philosophical or wisdom period; and (5) the later Hellenistic period, though these divisions are partly conventional, and often considerably overlap. As the conception of God deepens and becomes more universal, so the conceptions of morality widen and deepen, and become more spiritual.

35. (1) *The Patriarchal Period.* In the patriarchal period morality is very simple. It centres in the clan. The blessings it looks for as the reward of the righteous life are those of material prosperity and family well-being. It gives hospitality to the stranger within the gates, but is otherwise only concerned with him as a foreigner and a potential enemy. The moral outlook is narrow, exclusive, and material. The nearest parallel is found among the nomadic Arabs to-day.

36. (2) *The Legal Period.* In the legal period the Jewish people were developing from a tribe into a nation, and the emphasis is on national and social welfare. It was felt that the Jews had been wonderfully blest of God, and that thereby God had pledged Himself to the welfare of the Jews if only they would obey His will. He was " the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." He had brought His people out of the house of bondage. Israel was His chosen people, with whom He had made an everlasting covenant. This idea of the covenant between God and His chosen people was an enormously strong force in urging the people to obedience, and the fact that social morality was declared to be the will of the living God made for the wonderful idealism of the Mosaic law. Morality was not regarded merely as an affair of the State. It had a religious sanction; it was the will of God. It was because of the superiority of their worship over that of the heathen round about them

that their law was so superior. "What nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" (Deut. iv. 8). Religion and politics were inextricably intertwined. But this very mixture, while it meant the strengthening and purifying of society and the nation, tended at the same time to narrow the range of view, and in later times the Jews became a by-word for narrow national exclusiveness.

37. As the point of view was limited to the nation, so was it limited in the main to the material things of this life. The Jews seem in early times to have had singularly little interest in a future life. Certainly they spoke of the dead as being "gathered to their fathers," and there are numerous references to the shady region of Sheol; but again we read: "The dead cannot praise Thee; they that go down into Sheol cannot hope for Thy truth." Even in our Lord's time the Sadducees did not regard the doctrine of a future life as deducible from the Law. Hence the Jews looked for rewards and punishments to be obvious and plain in this life, and in the early history of the nation they believed that they saw the direct signs of the blessing of God. It was only in later times of foreign oppression and overwhelming calamity that the doubt sprang up whether this world was the only sphere in which the Divine judgment operates.

38. But the most marked feature of the legal period as it affects our subject is its externalism. The Jews were in a condition comparable to that of a child in tutelage. It must obey before it understands, and only by obedience does understanding grow. St. Paul felt that this was the peculiar characteristic of the Law—to be our pædagogue to lead us to Christ. It was a "law of commandments contained in ordinances" (Eph. ii. 15), but "the righteousness of faith speaketh on this wise, The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart" (Rom. x. 6–8). The Law awakened the sense of sin; it showed what holiness meant (Rom. vii. 7). By its very sternness it rebuked human imperfec-

tion, but by its inexorableness it became a burden to human weakness.

There is much that is very beautiful in the devout faith of the saints of the Old Testament. In the Psalms particularly we see how the obedience and fear due to God becomes united more and more with the love of God. But the Law by its very nature laid stress upon external acts of obedience—the Sabbath, the feasts, the sacrifices, the tithes—and as developed by the traditions of the Rabbis, the Law became increasingly a burden too heavy to be borne.

39. St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans shows how the Law could awaken the sense of sin without seeming to offer any real remedy for it. To those who were less earnest than St. Paul, as we see in the Pharisees of our Lord's time, the Jewish religion often seemed to tend to produce a very unlovable type of character, in which the whole stress was laid upon external obedience to Divine commands, and the deeper matters of the Law —justice, mercy, and faith—were utterly neglected. But to St. Paul, who could not be satisfied with this superficial religiosity, the Law had become a yoke which men were not able to bear, and he cries out: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" (Rom. vii. 24). He felt that the whole purpose of the Law was to convince of sin (Rom. iii. 20), but that it contained no real gospel, until it was fulfilled by the principle of spiritual union with Christ (Rom. viii. 1–4).

The morality of the Law, then, may be regarded as preparatory for a deeper spiritual morality, in which the nation would realise its world-wide mission, and in which the realisation of Divine grace would give the power that was lacking in the Mosaic Law.

40. (3) *The Prophetic Period.* In the times of the prophets we can trace the slow deepening and widening of the moral ideas of the Jews. The prophets insistently teach the necessity of inwardness in morality. The laws of God must be written not merely on tables of stone, but on tables that are hearts of flesh (Ezek. xxxvi. 26; 2 Cor. iii. 3). "To what purpose is the multitude of

your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Isa. i. 11–17). "I hate, I despise your feast-days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. . . . But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (Amos v. 21–24). "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? . . . He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah vi. 6–8). "Behold, thou requirest truth in the inward parts: and shalt make me to know wisdom secretly. . . . Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. li. 6, 10). With one voice the prophets denounce a merely formal religion, which is content with ceremonies and sacrifices. The Most High dwelleth only with the man of a humble and contrite heart, with him whose whole life is a sacrifice to the Lord in righteousness. Ezekiel speaks of the cleansing of the heart: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. . . . A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you" (Ezek. xxxvi. 25–26). Jeremiah looks forward to the superseding of the old by a new and

better covenant (Jer. xxxi. 31–34). This is the teaching of St. Paul. The old covenant is as it were the outward sign of the inward spirit, and the veil is done away in Christ (2 Cor. iii. 3, 14–18).

41. As the prophets began to see more and more clearly that the outward law was of value only in so far as it expressed the inward spirit, their hopes are seen to become less centred on outward prosperity. It is enough if the soul has communion with its God. "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; . . . Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Hab. iii. 17–18). "Nevertheless I am alway by thee, and thou hast holden me by my right hand. . . . My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever" (Ps. lxxiii. 23–26).

42. Perhaps the most remarkable change in the Old Testament towards deeper spiritual views is the new realisation of the meaning of sacrifice. Turn to Hebrews x. and see how the writer uses the teaching of Ps. xl. and Jer. xxxi. to show how impossible it is for us to think that the blood of bulls and of goats can take away sins. "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body (LXX. reading) hast thou prepared me. . . . Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (Heb. x. 5–7). The true sacrifice is the sacrifice of the heart and of the whole life of the servant of God. In Isaiah the series of passages concerning the Servant of God (Isa. xli. 8–16; xlii. 1–8; xlii. 18–25; xliii. 8–13; xliv. 1–4; xlviii. 20; xlix. 1–6; l. 4–10; lii. 13—liii. 12) all centre round this theme, until they eulminate in the great prophecy of chap. liii., which has always been taken in the Christian Church as the prophecy which foreshadows the Cross of Christ, in which the sacrifices of the Law reached their perfect fulfilment in the voluntary self-sacrifice of love.

43. It was in the teaching of the prophets, again, that the old national particularism of the Israelites began to merge into the wider, universalist view, as God became realised as the Ruler of all the nations. "In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria,

even a blessing in the midst of the land: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance" (Isa. xix. 24–25). "Men shall worship Him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen" (Zeph. ii. 11). "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Isa. lx. 1–11; cp. Amos i. and ii.).

44. It was also the prophets who began to emphasise the value of the individual soul. The earlier thought of the Jews was always of a social rather than an individual good. The solidarity of the nation was to them the supreme truth, and it cannot be said that the modern theory of individualism ever took possession of the Hebrew mind. "The hope of the saints was for a great national Deliverer rather than for a personal Redeemer" (Bruce, p. 22). But there are signs, especially in Ezekiel, chap xviii., that the individual was coming to be reckoned as having real value apart from the community, and although the idea of personal immortality, as distinct from national, was never entirely clear in the Old Testament, yet in passages like Dan. xii. 2–3, it is impossible to feel that the hope of everlasting life was not becoming more and more individualised; "some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." The Book of Daniel, however, is probably one of the latest writings in the Old Testament.

45. (4) *The Philosophical or Wisdom Period.* It is not strictly correct to speak of a philosophical period of Judaism, but the term perhaps may be allowed as covering the period in which the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament arose (Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and some of the Psalms), and the beginnings of the Apocrypha, especially the Wisdom of Solomon, and Ecclesiasticus. In this literature there is quite a different tone and outlook from those of the prophets. The key-note is not obedience, but wisdom. The Law came before the understanding of its principle. It was as if the nation was conscious of having reached the stage of manhood, and was casting off the restraints

of law, or rather subsuming them under a principle of life. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and from this source all the virtues spring. Wisdom is regarded as the principle of the Mind governing the universe, immanent in nature and in the moral order of the world, and he who has chosen the path of wisdom has within him a principle which will guide him in all the affairs of life. Hence these books are the most practical in the Old Testament in their precepts, and their writers have been well called the Humanists of Israel.

46. (5) *The Later Hellenistic Period.* It is customary to speak of later Judaism as a time of moral and religious deterioration, because we judge it mainly as it was in Judea, and from the pictures of the Pharisees and Sadducees of our Lord's time, as recorded in the Gospels. But it must be remembered that the Pharisaic and Sadducean views were not the whole of later Judaism. There were many in the Holy Land (as we may read in St. Luke ii. 25–32, 38; iii. 15) who were "looking for redemption in Jerusalem," and our Lord certainly found many, especially in Galilee, ready to welcome His gospel.

The Apocalyptic literature of later Judaism, and the Hellenistic ideas spreading mainly from Egypt, show the direction in which Judaism was tending, and it is remarkable how much of our Lord's teaching and that of St. Paul is foreshadowed in the writings of this later period.

47. It must be remembered that the Septuagint—itself a product of Hellenistic culture—was undoubtedly used by our Lord and the Apostles, and that at least one of the Apocalyptic books—the Book of Enoch—is quoted as Scripture in the New Testament (Jude 14). It is difficult for us to tell how far the Hellenistic ideas had penetrated in Judea, but the enumeration of the Hellenistic synagogues in Acts vi. 9 would seem to point to a much greater influence of Hellenism in Judea than has been commonly supposed. Hellenism must therefore be regarded as one of the great influences in Judaism immediately before the coming of our Lord.

48. We may summarise the tendencies of Hellenistic Judaism briefly as follows:

(1) It emphasised the part which every individual must play in the moral and religious life, and thus increased both the sense of individual responsibility and the belief in personal immortality.

(2) It became universalistic in its ideals, and thus paved the way for the universalism of Christianity. It is significant that it was St. Paul, of Tarsus, who first clearly grasped the universalism of Christ.

(3) The hope of the Messiah and of the Messianic Kingdom was spiritualised. In the Book of Enoch the Son of Man is a Heavenly Redeemer, who comes to inaugurate a world-wide Kingdom of God.

49. *The Preparation for Christianity.* We are thus brought to the threshold of Christianity, and, looking back, we see how, in the ages before Christ, there was an ever-growing development of moral ideas in the direction of Christ's teaching. This was pre-eminently so in Judaism, but the later Hellenistic Judaism had imbibed much of Greek and Roman thought, and almost certainly, especially through Egypt, much of the best thought of the farther East. Thus St. Paul reached his favourite idea that Christ came in the fullness of the ages, and Christ may be truly regarded as the culmination of the whole world-progress. Not the Jews only, but the Greek and Roman and Eastern thinkers may be regarded as His fore-runners, the preparers of His way. The Law, the prophets, the wise men and seers of all time, were the pædagogues to lead the world to the fullness of truth as it is in Christ.

50. *Christianity the Perfect Morality.* When the new covenant is realised as inward, spiritual, universal, both individual and social, both for time and for eternity, morality has reached the climax, beyond which it is impossible to conceive. Future morality cannot therefore supersede Christianity. It has reached its perfection, and its goal. In the future, morality can only, by the continual guidance of the ever-living Spirit, take of the things of Jesus, and show them to each generation in their ever-fresh and ever-

developing application. It is in this sense that Christian morality is to be regarded as final and complete. It is not a closed scheme of moral laws; it is the vital spirit of progress.

BOOKS

Bruce : *The Ethics of the Old Testament.*
Mozley : *Lectures on the Old Testament.*
Kirkpatrick : *Doctrine of the Prophets.*
Charles : *Between the Old and New Testaments.*
Oesterley : *The Books of the Apocrypha.*

CHAPTER V

THE CHRISTIAN BASIS

A.—Christian Doctrine

51. *The Pre-existent Word.* In our survey of the growth of moral ideas we have seen how they are all convergent upon Christ. He came to complete and to fulfil the past. There was a potentiality for Christ in the nature of man. There was a latency of the spirit of Christ in the Law and the Prophets. The Word was in the world before He became incarnate (John i. 10). He was the Light which lighteth every man coming into the world (John i. 9). The continuity of human development requires this view of the Logos (Reason, immanent and forth-going; hence, Expression, Word). The world was being prepared by lawgiver, prophet, sage, and saint for Him Who is the Light of the world. Human nature, that is, by the Divine purpose inherent in it, naturally tends to Christ. He is the fulfilment of the nature of every man—the "Son of Man" *par excellence.* "The soul of man," as Tertullian said, "is naturally Christian."

It is this thought of the immanence of the Christ-spirit in the world that we express by the phrases "pre-existence," "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts ii. 23), "slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. xiii. 8). The Prologue of St. John's Gospel (John i. 1–18) continues and fulfils the search of the Wisdom literature for the principle immanent in the universe. With St. John the Wisdom that was of the nature of God was at all times immanent in the world, and became expressed in its fullness in the incarnate Christ.

52. *The Incarnate Word.* In Christ the gradual

revelation of God to the race reaches its perfect expression. "The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John i. 17). "God, who by divers portions and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by a son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds" (Heb. i. 1–2). "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John xiv. 9). Christian morality begins with the revelation of God in Christ. It is rooted in doctrine, and cannot be separated from it. The Incarnation is not a philosophical doctrine only. It is that; but it is more than mere philosophy; it is the source and power of the new life. God has revealed Himself in His fullness, not only as Creator, Father, Lawgiver, or immanent Wisdom, but as Friend, Redeemer, Lover, and Saviour. Henceforth as Christians our whole attitude is changed. "We know whom we have believed"; and the new revelation of God in the face of Jesus Christ affects our whole ideas and motives. The revelation of "grace and truth" is as the coming of light in darkness. "The dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke i. 78–79).

53. *The Eternal Christ.* If the new revelation of God in Christ is the basis of all Christian morality, we shall not seek to find a systematised scheme, or even a complete outline of Christian morality in the records which are confined to the story of His life on earth, much less in some particular portion of those records, such as the Sermon on the Mount. The Gospels are the records of the life and words of Jesus on earth, but they are not the earliest books of the New Testament, and therefore do not contain the whole of Christianity. The Christian interpretation of the life of Jesus must be sought in the whole of the books of the New Testament. It may be even, that the latest books in point of time, such as the Gospel according to St. John, give the truest impression of the beliefs of the Apostles, after they had had time to consider the

full bearings of the life of Christ. The Epistles of St. Paul particularly, which are among the earliest writings of the New Testament, must be given full weight in our attempt to understand the doctrines of the primitive Church by which the written Gospels were produced and sanctioned.

Nothing is more certain than that the early Christians did not think of Christ only with reference to His earthly life and teachings. Their faith centred in a living Person, who had lived with men, and died for men, but who had risen again, and was for ever at the right hand of God. That Christ was living was vital to them. Christianity was not the assertion of a historical fact, or the acceptance of a body of teaching. It was faith in a living Lord, a risen, eternal Person. The belief in the Resurrection was vital. Christ to them was the Eternal Lord, the Conqueror of sin and death, " by whom all things were made, and in whom all things cohere " (Col. i. 16–18). His influence was not limited by His earthly life; " all things were created through Him, and unto Him . . . that in all things He might have the pre-eminence." Hence their belief that He was ordained to be the judge of the living and the dead, " whom the heavens must receive until the time of the restoration of all things " (Acts iii. 21). This is the faith that is embodied in the Christian creeds.

54. *The Holy Spirit.* Again, an essential belief of the early Christians was that Christ was still " working with them " (Mark xvi. 20) in the person of the Holy Spirit, " the Comforter, whom the Father will send in my name " (John xiv. 26). In the coming of the Holy Spirit, Christ Himself comes to His disciples : " I will not leave you desolate; I come to you " (John xiv. 18), " and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world " (Matt. xxviii. 20). In this belief the Church went out to do its work, " and the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved " (Acts ii. 47). We have only to read the New Testament to see how vital was this belief to the early Church. They believed that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of

Christ, the Spirit of God, was with them to guide them into all truth, to take of the things of Jesus, and declare them unto them (John xvi. 13–14), to teach them all things, and to bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever Jesus had said unto them (John xiv. 26).

B.—Christian Faith

55. *The Nature of Faith.* It was with this belief, then, that the Church began its work in the world; and all the practical results in the Church have been due to this belief. The Christian life is the practical working-out of the Christian creed, and the creed dominates the whole outlook on life. Christian faith is personal trust in the person of the Living Christ. Through Him came "grace and truth" into the world. Hence belief in Him as the Lord is the transforming power in Christian character. It is not a cold, intellectual theory; it is not a mere intellectual acceptance of a system of orthodoxy; it is personal contact in the spirit. Christian morality can henceforth, therefore, be no mere obedience to a written law, as if we were slaves. The new Covenant is one of friendship. "No longer do I call you slaves, but friends" (John xv. 15).

Christianity has here reached the inwardness of spiritual communion with God. "If Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness" (Rom. viii. 10). "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye received not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. viii. 14–17). "For all things are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. iii. 21–23).

56. *Faith and Works.* In contrast with the old principle of obedience to commandments, St. Paul could speak of this new principle of faith as the ground

of our justification. This does not "make the law of none effect. God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (Rom. iii. 31). If we are united with Christ, then the life of Christ in us will give us power to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. vi. 4). "Even so, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 11). It is this fructifying power of faith that is emphasised in the Epistle of St. James. The perfect law is that of liberty (Jas. i. 25), but "faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself" (ii. 17). "By works is faith made perfect" (ii. 22); "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (ii. 24); and this faith is spoken of in exactly the same terms as our Lord used with regard to His disciples: "Abraham was called the friend of God" (ii. 23; cp. John xv. 15).

57. *Faith the Root of all the Virtues.* This personal faith by which the "grace" of God in Christ is received becomes the germinating principle of every virtue. "By faith we wait for the hope of righteousness" (Gal. v. 5). "Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love" (Gal. v. 6). Here we have the abiding trinity of Christian virtues (1 Cor. xiii. 13), and when faith has been perfected in love, "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10). The man who loves God "keepeth His word, and in him hath the love of God been perfected"; and "he that saith he abideth in Him ought himself so to walk, even as He walked" (1 John ii. 5–6).

C.—The Christian Ideal

58. *Fellowship with God.* The ideal of Christian morality, then, is the highest that we can conceive. It is nothing less than fellowship with God. The revelation of "grace and truth" is received by faith, and that faith fructifies in all the virtues, the crown of which is love. There is no greater power than love. It is the dynamic of morality. It knows no limits. Love seeks union with its object in heart and life. And the love of God means that we must seek such

complete unity with Him that we shall be satisfied with nothing less than perfection. "Be ye perfect, as your Father who is in heaven is perfect."

Individually, the love of God means life, eternal life, holiness, and perfection, "even as He walked." Socially the love of God means that we are committed to nothing less than the doing of His will, in earth as it is in heaven. And everything which comes short of this perfection in the individual or social life is sin; "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23). Hence the great yearning of the Christian is always for union of heart and mind with God, and so long as he comes short of this, the cry of his heart is for restoration, reconciliation. It is the very perfection of the ideal that creates so deep a sense of sin, and Christianity begins with the humble prayer of the penitent who has caught a far-off glimpse of the ideal that lies beyond his reach. "I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto Him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. . . . But the Father said, This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found" (Luke xv. 11–32).

59. *Christ the Way.* The vision of the unattained ideal for man we find in Jesus Christ. We who have seen Him have seen the Father, and Jesus Christ becomes to us our pattern and our inspiration, as well as our Helper and Lord. He "left us an example, that we should follow His steps" (1 Pet. ii. 21). But it is not according to the letter, but according to the spirit that we must follow. "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know Him so no more" (2 Cor. v. 16). But the Christ whose love constraineth us (2 Cor. v. 14) is the same Christ "that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. viii. 34). The words we have in the Gospels from His lips "are spirit, and are life" (John vi. 63), and it is from the records of that life that we are enabled to fill up the contents of the Christian life, remembering that we are to be as Christ

in the world; " as Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world " (John xvii. 18); " he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father " (John xiv. 12).

60. *The Universality of Christ.* If we compare the example and teaching of Christ with all that went before, we see how He fulfilled all that men yearned for. There is nothing of value in any scheme of morality that is not included in the Christian scheme. Jesus taught the exceeding importance of every individual soul, and His Gospel was for the whole world. He emphasised the inward, spiritual character of all religion, and He said that His disciples were to be the salt, the light of the world. He taught us that the whole life must be centred in God, but all human duties are included in the second commandment: " Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." He taught us to think of the Kingdom which was not of this world (John xviii. 36); yet He said: " Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's " (Matt. xxii. 21).

Are we not therefore right in saying that Christian morality is universal in its scope, and includes all duties in all relationships of life? St. Paul has struck this universal note of Christ's teaching in his well-known words to the Philippians: " Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovable, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things " (Phil. iv. 8).

CHAPTER VI

CRITICISMS OF CHRISTIAN MORALITY

61. CHRISTIAN Morality has been criticised from many points of view, especially in recent years. It will be convenient to summarise these modern criticisms under four heads: (1) It has no need of theology; (2) It is too individualistic, and anti-social; (3) It is the morality of the weak; (4) It allows too little for progress; it is too static.

62. (1) *It has no Need of Theology.* In the stress of the conflict between religion and science towards the end of the nineteenth century, many tried to show that whatever happened to the dogmas of religion, Christian morality could be in no way affected. This was the line of argument in Matthew Arnold's *Literature and Dogma*, and many of the leading scientists claimed that morality was scientifically justified without the necessity of religion. As an example of this type of thought, let us examine a few paragraphs from *A Modern Zoroastrian*, by Samuel Laing, a prolific Agnostic writer whose books have been widely circulated by the Rationalist Association.

63. "Theological Christianity says that the one thing needful is to believe in the Catholic Faith as defined by the Athanasian Creed, without which we shall 'without doubt perish everlastingly.' Practical Christianity has completely dropped the Holy Ghost, and relegated the Father into ever vaguer and greater distance; while it has fastened more and more on the figure of Jesus of Nazareth as the practical living embodiment of the good principle of the universe. . . . In a word, modern Christians are, to a great extent,

without knowing it, worshippers of Ormuzd, with Christ for their Ormuzd.

" To this I see no sort of objection. The tendency to personify abstract principles is ineradicable in human nature, and Jesus has the immense advantage of being in possession of the field. . . . It would be difficult to invent a better ideal or a more perfect example. No doubt the ideal, like all human conceptions, is not absolutely perfect. . . . It would not do in practice if smitten on one cheek to turn the other, or to take no thought for the morrow and live like the sparrows. . . . The opposition between the flesh and the spirit is also stated so absolutely, that it is apt to lead to a barren and ignoble asceticism. . . . But the gentler teachings of Christianity will long be wanted as an influence to soften, to elevate, and to purify. . . . But this is in no way connected with the supernatural dogmas and legends which have come down from superstitious ages, and which are seen to stand in direct contradiction to the real facts and real laws of the universe. . . . The dogmas and miracles may quietly fade out of sight . . . and yet the essence of Christianity will remain, as a worship of the good and beautiful, personified in the brightest example which has been afforded—that of Jesus, the son of the carpenter of Nazareth " (pp. 181–3).

64. " The fundamental precepts of the moral law are the necessary growth and products of human nature, in the course of the evolution of society from rude beginnings to a high civilisation " (p. 185). " The evolutionist theory of morality is the true one " (p. 188). " The moral instincts, however they have been formed, are imperative laws. . . . Man is to a very great extent dependent on his environment and his place in evolution, both for his moral code and for the force of will and conscience which enable him to conform to it " (p. 196).

65. A Christian can accept a good deal of this, but will deny that the Christian theology has no place in the evolution of thought. Morality is no more an instinct than religion, and if religion is weakened,

generally speaking, morality is weakened too, sooner or later. The best evidence for this statement is the fact that as Christian doctrines have been attacked, so one by one the precepts of Christian morality have been attacked, and the opponents of Christianity to-day, so far from accepting Christian morality, rather deny that morality is anything but an obsolete tradition.

For the intimate connection between Christian doctrine and morality, the student should consult Wace: *Christianity and Morality.*

66. (2) *It is too Individualistic, and Anti-social.* "Christian morality may be good for individuals, but it cannot govern society" (Frederick Harrison). "It does not apply to international affairs" (Lytton). These are forms of the objection to-day, and the opposition of the Roman Empire to Christianity in the early days was only another form of the same objection. Strauss, in his *Life of Jesus* (1864), summarises these objections in this way:

"The life of man in the family retreats into the background with this teacher, who himself was without a family. His relationship towards the State appears a purely passive one. He is averse to acquisition of property, not merely for himself because of his calling, but he is also visibly disinclined to it; and all that concerns art and the beautiful enjoyment of life remains completely outside of his circle of vision." Jesus, he says, was a dualist. "In fact, the Christian dualism has essentially the same consequences as the Buddhistic nihilism as regards the contemplation and guidance of human life and its relationships. Nothing that may here present itself as aim and object to human activity has a real value. . . . Accordingly the striving after earthly goods, and even the possession of them in so far as one does not voluntarily divest himself of them, is pre-eminently of evil" (Luthardt, pp. 88–94).

67. One must confess that these objections have often received a certain amount of justification from the defective appreciation by many Christians of the social implications of their Faith, but whatever may be said of certain forms of Christian asceticism and

individualism, the wholesale condemnation of Jesus as opposed to marriage, hostile to art, indifferent towards political life, and Buddhistic in the renunciation of all earthly ties, seems almost too ludicrous to answer. That Christian morality is not concerned with society, but only with the salvation of the individual soul, we utterly deny, but this will be more fully dealt with in Part III.

Meanwhile we need only refer to the long roll of Christian reformers, statesmen, kings, soldiers, and pioneers in every department of human progress, who have found in the Christian faith the inspiration for all their work, and to the teachings in our own generation of such Christians as Westcott, Kingsley, Maurice, Booth, Rowntree, and Gore.

68. (3) *It is the Morality of the Weak.* This criticism is principally connected with the name of Nietzsche, though it has had influential representatives in this country, especially in the writings of Bernard Shaw. It is in the long prefaces to the plays of Bernard Shaw, rather than in the plays themselves, that these criticisms are to be found, and they are particularly asserted in the Preface to *Man and Superman.*

What, then, is Nietzsche's criticism? Christianity is a cunning device, evolved for the purpose of enabling an inferior and ignoble class of human beings to maintain themselves in the struggle for existence—a device of the same nature and serving a similar purpose, as the mimicry and parasitism by means of which certain ignoble creatures among the lower animals maintain themselves. "It has been reserved to Nietzsche," say his admirers, "to solve satisfactorily the problem of Christianity, and of moral and religious evolution generally, in strict accordance with Darwinian principles. Gibbon's view of Christianity as favourable to the lower classes is almost similar to that of Nietzsche, only Gibbon did not express himself so clearly on the subject, and evolutionary ideas were then unknown" (*Nietzsche—Selections*, compiled by Thomas Common).

69. Here are a few quotations. "Life itself is will

to power." "Our duties are the rights which others have upon us." "There is master-morality and slave-morality. . . . The profound reverence for age and tradition is typical of the morality of the powerful. . . . There is no greater contrast than that between master-morality and the morality of the Christian conceptions of worth, the latter having grown up on a thoroughly morbid soil. . . . Master-morality affirms life, just as distinctly as Christian morality denies ('God,' 'the other world,' and 'self-renunciation' are nothing but negations)." "The Christian seeks to get rid of himself; master-morality has, reversely, its roots in a triumphal self-affirmation; it is the self-glorifying of life." "Christianity might be called a great treasure-chamber of the most ingenious comforting expedients." "Weakness is falsified into merit, impotence into goodness, abjectness into humility, subjection into obedience." "The Christian and the anarchist are of the same origin; their object is solely destructive; they are both decadents. Christianity was the vampire of the Roman Empire—in the night it undid the immense achievement of the Romans of obtaining the site for a grand civilisation." "God is dead; we now want the over-man to live." "What is more injurious than any crime? Practical sympathy for all the defective and weak—Christianity." "Man must be trained for war, and woman for the relaxation of the warrior; all else is folly. Ye should love peace as a means to new war; and the short peace more than the long. I do not exhort you to work, but to fight. I do not exhort you to peace, but to victory." "Believe it, my brethren, the Hebrew Jesus died too early; he himself would have disavowed his doctrine if he had attained my age; he was noble enough to disavow. But he was still immature."

70. It should be noted that Nietzsche's teaching was a reaction from that of Schopenhauer, who found in Christian mysticism the justification for his pessimistic attitude towards life. His teaching was to this extent a healthy reaction from what he believed was mere maudlin sentiment, but Christianity would be

in a bad way if it had to be identified with every strange caricature of its tenets.

It would be very easy to show that Nietzsche did not do justice to the Christian teaching. Jesus was anything but a sentimentalist, and by no means a feeble weakling, and the New Testament is full of calls to the very highest courage and heroism. But what can be said to one who says: "In the whole of the New Testament only a single figure appears which demands our respect—Pilate, the Roman governor. I have searched the New Testament in vain for a single congenial trait; there is nothing in it which can be called free, generous, candid, upright."

71. But Nietzsche's teaching does not find justification in the ordinary facts of human life. As a matter of fact it is not the autocrat and bully that have the greatest power in human affairs, but the man who can win the masses. The haughty megalomaniac may triumph for a time, but the humble, patient, persevering idealist will win in the end. If survival be the test, Christianity is showing that it is the strongest of all forces in the world. Napoleon ended in St. Helena. The Kaiser—where is he? The final condemnation of Nietzschean doctrine is surely to be found in the ruin in which it has involved Germany. After all, it is "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts," that nations or individuals live, and God has over and over again used the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty.

72. (4) *It allows too little for Progress; it is too Static.* This criticism is associated with the name of Bergson because of the impetus he has given to a trend of thought which is becoming very popular in our time, though the criticism is not found in the writings of Bergson specifically applied to Christian morality, and he would probably disown the application. Bergson's philosophy centres round the idea of "creative evolution." The world is not merely evolving; it is a new creation every day. The inherent life-force is ever producing something new. All our science is the

systematising of past experience; its forms will not necessarily be true to the experience of the future. It is in our intuitions rather than in our reasonings that we approach nearest to the vital process. It is intuition that is our best guide to the real meaning of life.

73. In Maeterlinck and in Bertrand Russell this insistence on intuition, life-force, and ever-changing movement becomes a disbelief in any form of traditional morality as too static. In Russell's *Principles of Social Reconstruction* morality is altogether disconnected from the past, and becomes a restless search after new expressions of life. It is anarchic, revolutionary, disintegrating. The ever-changing needs of life dictate new moral standards, or rather the abolition of all standards. Old standards cannot be applied to new phases of life; nor can one individual say what is good for another. The institutions of private property, the State, the Church, marriage, the educational system, have all become obsolete. New needs dictate new methods. The criticisms in many cases are exceedingly valuable for their analysis of "things as they are," but the total repudiation of any real standard undermines the possibility of any morality that can remain valid. Morality becomes, not a universally valid standard, but an ever-changing flux.

74. Much of the same type of thought is discernible in the writings of H. G. Wells, and in the literature of the advanced "feminist" movement. To the leaders of this movement there is no objective standard of marriage, and the very bases of society are all experimental. No definite standard or law is possible. The very idea of law, since law is necessarily static, is repudiated. The only guide is individual intuition, which of course may easily be individual caprice.

75. Now it is a mistake to suppose that Christian morality is static, and does not allow for movement. In the doctrine of the Holy Spirit we have the principle of perpetual advance; here is the doctrine of "creative evolution" embedded in the faith ages before Bergson was born. But it has its own safe-guard. The

advance does not go contrary to the original impetus in the life of Christ. The Holy Spirit cannot alter the principles of Christ, though these principles may be progressively developed in their application. Christianity has its objective standard, by which to test the spirits whether they be of God, in the person of Christ, while at the same time it continually takes out of the Divine treasure-house " things new and old." Without such an objective test morality is reduced to a mere chaos of feelings, and Christianity is rather on the side of those who believe that we have been furnished with a sure criterion of truth, and that in Christ we have a firm foundation, and an eternal Rock on which to build.

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PART II

PERSONAL CHARACTER

CHAPTER VII

THE INDIVIDUAL IDEAL

76. *Necessity of the Right Ideal.* In Part I has been shown the intimate connection between thought and conduct. A man's life is shaped by his creed. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. xxiii. 7). It is therefore important, when we come to the analysis of individual character, for us to have a right idea at what we should aim. It is not easy to sum up the true ideal in one word, which will avoid all possible objections, but a consideration of some of the aims which have been put before men will help us to understand better the nature of what is sought.

77. *Happiness.* The end which is sought is described by most systems of ethics as happiness. It is universally recognised that man instinctively craves for happiness, and the truly moral life seems to be that which conduces to that end. Certainly, Christianity has no objection to this doctrine. The promises of religion are all to the righteous; though Christ taught us to use the word "blessedness" rather than "happiness," as implying the fuller, inward joy of the soul rather than the mere outward "happiness" of prosperity. The objection to using the word "happiness" is that it does not sufficiently clearly define in what happiness consists. The Epicureans of old took it to mean pre-eminently "pleasure"; but, though there are pleasures that are absolutely pure

and ennobling, it is easy to see how the word could be degraded; and degenerate Epicureans have brought the doctrine into disrepute.

78. *Virtue.* To avoid this danger, the Stoics chose the word " virtue " to indicate the end desired. Moral rectitude to them was more important than pleasure or pain; often indeed pain seemed to them a good superior to pleasure, and to be sought as a means to strengthen the soul. The only happiness, they said, worth having was that which came to the man who lived virtuously, even if that virtuous life involved pain rather than pleasure. It was virtue, then, not happiness, that was to be sought. Better a life that was short and full, than a long life of mere outward tranquillity. There was no higher ideal in the ancient world than the Stoic; but the stress upon the harder virtues, the doubt as to the possibility of happiness, the suspicion of all emotions lest they should weaken the moral fibre, often produced a type of character—cold, hard, severe—that was in many ways noble and worthy of admiration, but unlovable in the extreme.

Christianity has a great deal in common with Stoicism. " Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you " (Matt. vi. 33). Virtue comes first, and blessedness follows as the result of virtue. But Christianity does not treat happiness as a thing to be suspected, nor pain as good in itself, nor does it distrust the emotions, but rather seeks to heighten them. Blessedness, joy, peace, are regarded as the natural results of the true life; though the Christian is called not to avoid the path of difficulty and sacrifice when the cause of the Kingdom demands it. When all sin has been banished then, we read, " there shall be no more pain."

79. *Self-Realisation.* Neither the word " happiness " nor " virtue " really defines the object which we are to seek. What makes for happiness? What constitutes virtue? There is room here for wide differences of opinion, and everything depends upon the connotation we give to these words. An attempt has been made more

closely to define the character of the end that is sought, by the word "self-realisation." The end of morality is the realisation to the full of the whole of one's nature and faculties. A human being becomes perfect, and attains perfect happiness, when he follows perfectly the laws of his own nature. It will be remembered that the Stoics held a very similar ideal—"to live in accordance with nature." Christianity can fully accept this doctrine if it is interpreted aright—everything again depends on our conception of what constitutes human nature. One objection that has been raised against the use of the term "self-realisation" is that it seems to exaggerate the importance of the self. It does not really do so. Self-realisation does not imply such care for oneself that one's duties to others are neglected. Our social duties are part of our own self-realisation. We do not fulfil ourselves except in right relation to our fellows. Nor need the word minister to pride, as if man were a self-contained being in the universe. When St. Paul said: "Yet not I, but Christ that dwelleth in me," he realised that the humble recognition of his own weakness apart from Christ was necessary to the complete knowledge of himself. But these objections show that it is necessary to go more fully into the nature of the "self" which is to be realised, and to inquire what exactly is the ideal which Christian morality sets before us.

80. *The Nature of Self-Realisation.* (1) *Sons of God.* The Church Catechism at the very outset defines the ideal attaching to the Christian name in the words: "I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." The Christian ideal is the realisation of ourselves in our relation to God, and to Christ, and to the kingdom of heaven. Man, that is, is the son of God, united with Christ, and a partaker in an eternal, spiritual fellowship. His highest good is the full realisation of his own nature, what he has been made, what he is, and what he is to be. The ideal is latent within him, though in its perfection it still lies in the future. It is an ideal to be striven for; yet it is realised from within; in his

own nature is the earnest of his inheritance; God has made him with the seal of his destiny within him. As the child of God, he is the heir of all things. "All things are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." He is a freeborn son in the household of God. Therefore there is nothing in heaven or on earth that is beyond him. "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet" (Ps. viii.). He is the lord of nature, the heir of all the ages, united in a common fellowship with all mankind, the heir of immortality. His life is not merely temporal and material; it is spiritual, eternal. For spiritual life is not conditioned by time; it is by nature timeless; and the fact that the spirit of man even now is dominant over the flesh implies an immortality independent of the flesh. The earnest of our immortality is within our very nature.

81. (2) *Christ the Life.* The realisation of perfect manhood was made manifest in Christ, who called Himself "the Son of God." Therefore, for a fuller understanding of our own sonship with God, we take Jesus Christ as the supreme exemplar. Not that we can follow Him in every detail of His life, but that we take Him as the type, the norm, of Christian character. It is in His spirit we desire to live; we desire to be governed by the principles which regulated His life. He is the personification of our ideal. But He is more. He is the Way, and also the Life, and as "members of Christ," united with Him, we believe that He lives to help us to live so that we may be "like Him" (1 John iii. 2). "He that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure (1 John iii. 3).

82. (3) *Fellowship in the Kingdom of God.* Human personality can never reach its perfection in individual isolation. Indeed, it is impossible for us to imagine an entirely isolated individual. All modern psychology emphasises the solidarity of mankind. No one can exist who is neither parent nor child, and in a thousand and one relations with his fellows. All these relationships imply a certain amount of dependence

on one another, and a corresponding duty. What these social duties are will fall to be considered in Part III; but it must be carefully noted here that the social duties are not brought in as, so to speak, from outside, but they arise from the inherent nature of our own personalities. We are not complete apart from the society to which we belong.

In terms of ordinary life, this environment to which we belong is called "humanity," or, in a wider reference, "nature." But if man is the "child of God," and "a member of Christ," this implies that he belongs to an order that is "supra-natural" and "supra-temporal," a heavenly or spiritual order that is not expressible in terms of matter or time. Thus, man is described as "an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven"—not, that is, the heir of something which is merely future, but the partaker in a real fellowship that is eternally present and timeless. It is this timeless nature of the kingdom of God which is expressed in the Greek word "æonios," or "eternal." The things of time, as we shall see, are made to be the reflex in the temporal sphere of the higher heavenly order, but it is from his realisation of the kingdom of heaven that the Christian takes his inspiration for the social duties of this life. By the fulfilment of his social duties as well as by the cultivation of his own personal character, he reaches the full ideal of self-realisation as a Christian. The fulfilment of the social duties is an integral part of personal perfection.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE NATURAL BASIS

83. *The Ideal and the Natural.* The Christian ideal is perfection in Christ. But we are at once held up by the thought that some seem to start very severely handicapped in the race. We are all very different by nature—in mind, in body, in temperament; and the exact rule of duty which applies to one will not apply in every respect to another. The path must be conditioned by the starting-point. "First that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual" (1 Cor. xv. 46). The exact course which each must take towards the spiritual ideal of self-realisation must be conditioned in accordance with his own nature. Christianity has no iron law for all.

84. *The Body.* Leaving aside for a time the primary division into sexes, it is obvious that we are endowed at birth with bodies of very different nature. Some are born strong and healthy, others weak and sickly. It is no part of our present task to account for the differences of body with which we are born. In the East the popular explanation is that of re-incarnation—that the manner and status of our birth is conditioned by our lives in a previous state of existence. Our Lord does not seem to countenance this idea in St. John ix. 1–3, though it was obviously in the minds of His questioners, and He shows at least that it is not the only possible explanation. It is not to be expected, however, that those who are bodily handicapped can run identically the same course as a man with a perfect physique. Moreover, it is generally accepted that the condition of the body does affect the whole manhood. All we can say is that we must make the best of our natural

endowments, believing that God does not expect from those who have few talents as much as from those who are more favourably endowed. "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke xii. 48).

85. It is a natural duty to take care of the health of the body, and religion cannot cancel a natural duty. Our body is entrusted to us by God, and we dare not violate our trust. There are times when our duty towards our body has to be subordinated to a higher duty, but this does not imply the abrogation of the natural duty, but only its supersession for a time. There are systems which despise the body, and make it a virtue if the body be neglected, starved, and crushed, supposing that it is only so that the soul can be emancipated. Christianity does teach that there are occasions when the body must be strictly disciplined and subdued, but the necessity of discipline is very different from the doctrine that the body is in itself evil. This is a definitely dualistic conception, and has no place in the Christian scheme, though it has at times, through the introduction of Eastern ideas, played no little part in the history of the Church, by the exaltation of virginity, celibacy, monasticism, and asceticism. The Christian ideal, however, must not be confused with the vagaries of isolated individuals such as the "pillar-saints," or even the notions of a prolonged period such as the Middle Ages. Critics such as Strauss are always confusing the aberrations of a period with the declared doctrines of Christianity, as if there were no New Testament to remind us constantly of the real standards of the Faith. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? Therefore glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. vi. 19–20). The body is God-given, as well as the spirit; and though the body must be kept subservient to the spirit, this does not mean that the body is to be scorned, but rather that we should "present our bodies as instruments of righteousness" (Rom. vi. 13).

86. The Christian ideal is certainly not to be satisfied

merely by a highly-trained physical body—for man is greater than his body—but by making the natural the basis and instrument of the spiritual. We have a duty to the body—" to keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity," that is, to use it rightly according to its true purpose, and not to abuse it by giving rein to the appetites. " The sinful lusts of the flesh " will certainly be renounced by the man who realises that he is a son of God, because they unfit him for his highest service; but he will exercise every possible care of the body, because only so can he be fitted to fulfil his vocation in the world.

87. *The Mind.* The principle of the Parable of the Talents seems to apply especially in the case of the mind. It is particularly difficult to apply any exact and stringent code to the variety of minds with which men are born. There are some who are altogether incapable of moral ideas—the lunatic; others with but the feeblest power to respond—the feeble-minded, dipsomaniac, kleptomaniac, and so on. Others seem born morally hardened or become so very early in life, as the children of criminals. In all these cases there is probably some point at which they will respond to the love of others, but, while this gives added responsibility to society, it means that we cannot expect from them all that we expect from the more highly gifted members of society.

88. Apart from these cases, it is obvious that one of our natural duties is the training of the mind, with a view to the full realisation of all our latent faculties. Morality is not merely knowledge—Christianity is for the babes and sucklings as well as for the wise—else we should make morality only possible for the learned. Nevertheless, since the mind as well as the body is God-given, we should see to it that we do not neglect its cultivation. Wilfully to neglect this when we have the opportunity is surely wrong.

This natural duty has not always been appreciated. As there has been an asceticism of the body, so there has been often in religious circles an asceticism which has depreciated the mind. This was a fault of the old Puritans, and it is this which gives the point to

Nietzsche's criticism with regard to Pascal: "Christianity has depraved the reason even of the intellectually strongest natures, by teaching men to regard the highest qualities of intelligence as sinful, as misleading, as temptations. The most lamentable example is the ruin of Pascal, who believed in the corruption of his reason by original sin, whereas it had only been depraved by Christianity." But surely this is not fair to Pascal. There is a great difference between an undue trust in the capabilities of reason and regarding it as sinful, though there have been those who regarded occupation with the things of the mind as likely to wean the soul away from higher things. This asceticism of the mind is not found in the New Testament. Even St. Paul, who speaks slightingly at times of the "wisdom of the world," as found in cities like Corinth, delights to "speak wisdom among them that are perfect" (1 Cor. ii. 6), but to him wisdom and knowledge are both gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 8). We must use our judgment in all things (1 Cor. x. 15; xi. 13, 14; Phil. iv. 8). If we are the heirs of all things and lords of nature, then there is no department of art or science which should be neglected. There should be no suspicion on the part of scientists, dramatists, artists, or musicians, that their realm of thought is looked askance at by Christians. Rather, everything that makes for the ennobling and enriching of human life should be welcomed as tribute to the kingdom of God: "and they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it" (Rev. xxi. 24–25).

89. Of course, it is possible for one to be so absorbed in the affairs of the mind that other things, more important, are forgotten. Christianity bids us look to the welfare of the whole of our manhood, and it is necessary for the balance of the whole that no one faculty should be cultivated at the expense of the highest. The same principle applies to undue concentration on the affairs of the spirit to the neglect of the body and mind. "Let all things be done decently and in order"; "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets"

(1 Cor. xiv. 33, 40). What St. Paul says of the whole body of the Church is equally applicable to the individual life: "the whole body, fitly framed together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. iv. 16).

90. *The Temperaments.* Deeper than the purely mental or bodily differences of men, there is a difference which is very closely allied to the moral and spiritual—the difference of temperaments. Whatever may be the origin of temperament, there is undoubtedly in all of us a predisposition to certain virtues or faults; yet since these predispositions are a matter of birth rather than of conscious personal choice, we cannot properly give them the name of virtues or vices, which assume a certain amount of moral choice. Aristotle distinguished between the natural and ethical virtues, and attributed no value to natural virtues in themselves. Morality begins in the way in which these are used and disciplined. Natural virtues may even become hurtful if they are not governed by the practical wisdom which assigns to each virtue its due place and limit. The good-natured man, for instance, may be so carried away by his good nature that he cannot exercise, when necessary, strict discipline and justice; and the man naturally just may not know how and when to exercise mercy.

91. The main types of temperament are usually classified as follows:

(1) The sanguine temperament. This predisposes to hope, joy, love of nature, the æsthetic sense, and helps to promote the higher life of love and service. Its characteristic danger is to be satisfied with the present; to be superficial, indecisive, unreliable, volatile.

(2) The melancholic temperament. This tends to thoughtfulness, earnestness, depth, warm affection, and a strong sense of duty. Its danger is to become morbid, gloomy, pessimistic, secluded, and unpractical.

(3) The choleric temperament is practical, energetic,

adventurous, courageous, determined. Its characteristic faults are obstinacy, bigotry, irritability, jealousy, pride, hatred.

(4) The phlegmatic temperament is quiet, contemplative, calm, restful, and relies on inner sources for strength. It too has its dangers—indifference to others, sloth, lack of enthusiasm, contentment with everything; "whatever is, is good."

If the ideal is self-realisation, it is important for each of us to remember the old motto which was engraved over the portals of the temple of Apollo at Delphi: "Man, know thyself." We should study to know ourselves, and build up the truly ethical life according to the natural foundation.

92. *Sex.* The most fundamental difference in human nature is that of sex. It is a difference not merely of the body, but of the whole personality. The sexual difference is psychic as well as physical, and affects the whole outlook. In general, it may be said that men are of the choleric and phlegmatic temperaments, women of the melancholic or sanguine. Where the opposites are found, we speak of a man as being effeminate, and a woman as too masculine. But the differences go deeper still. Man tends to dominate, to struggle, to fight. He will die for an idea. His characteristic virtue is courage; his failing, obstinacy. Woman is predisposed to serve, to mitigate, to soften. She is more pliable, more passive. Her characteristic virtue is gentleness; her failing, superficiality.

93. These differences are bound to influence the moral and religious outlook. Women will respect authority more than men; hence, they are more inclined to worship. Man asks a reason for everything, and is naturally more sceptical. Women, again, will refer everything to the ideal of the family. Men are more independent, and think rather of the individual. Men are devoted to abstractions; women to the concrete. Hence, tradition and convention will appeal more to the woman than to a man; he is ever restless for new adventures and experiments.

94. Now the Christian ideal of the realisation of

ourselves as the children of God is wide enough for all, but the cogency of the appeal to men and women will differ according to the mode of its presentment. It has often been noted that in the character of Christ we find the combination of the feminine as well as the masculine virtues, and if the Church emphasises the gentleness of Christ, women will respond more than men to the appeal. But Christ was not only gentle, but strong. A man will appreciate more the character of Christ when he learns of His moral indignation, His idealism, His courage, and His call to sacrifice and death.

This consideration of the characteristic appeal to the sexes has perhaps not been sufficiently realised in the Christian Churches. As we saw in the first part, Nietzsche began his attacks on Christianity by an intensely masculine revolt against what he deemed the effeminacy of Christian morality. In speaking of the *Imitatio Christi*, he wrote: "The *Imitatio Christi* is one of the books which I cannot hold in my hand without a physiological resistance; it exhales a *parfum* of the eternally feminine." Nietzsche's revolt was in large measure a healthy reaction from the over-emphasis on the gentleness of Christ. We know the sugary, sickly sentimentalism of many of our hymns and of religious art, and the stained-glass windows of our churches often depict Christ and the saints as anything but the ideal of human nature. It is this glorification of weakness that has been the stumbling-block to strong men, and it is utterly alien to the heroic courage of our Lord and the apostles. In the Church's exposition of the ideal, we need to restore the manly virtues to their rightful place, and appeal for the same unflinching zeal and self-sacrificing devotion to the cause of God that we find in the New Testament.

Here is the picture of the Christian's Christ: "His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth

went a sharp two-edged sword; and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. i. 14–18).

CHAPTER IX

VIRTUE

95. *The Unity of Virtue.* It is customary in ordinary speech to speak of many virtues, and it would be possible, in an analysis of the Christian character, to take these virtues and describe them one by one. This was the method of Aristotle in his *Ethics*. In the Middle Ages, the four cardinal virtues (justice, prudence, courage, and temperance) became, by the addition of faith, hope, and charity, the seven cardinal virtues of the scholastic theologians.

But this method does not show the unity of the Christian character, nor does it show the real nature of virtue. For character is not a mere bundle of disconnected virtues, but a unity arising from the heart and will. Neither can virtue be estimated merely from its external manifestations. Conduct has value only as a manifestation of the inner life. St. Augustine showed how all the virtues were to be regarded as developments of the love of God. Faith in God, ripening into hope and love, is the foundation of the Christian character; morality does not consist in following a code of laws, or cultivating a number of isolated virtues, but in the allegiance of the heart to the living God.

96. *The Inwardness of Virtue.* Our Lord's treatment of the Jewish decalogue shows the stress He laid upon the inwardness of morality (Matt. v. 21–48). In every case He shows that the sin lies, not in the outward act, but in the inward thought or passion. "Thou shalt not kill" refers to "whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause." As the Catechism puts it: "To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart; to hurt

nobody by word or deed." "Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Here our Lord gives the seventh commandment the inmost possible meaning. Virtue and vice consist in the motive and intention, not in the mere outward deed or action. This is one of the most characteristic features of Christian morality, though anticipated, as we have seen, in passages such as Jer. xxxi. 31–34: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts."

97. *Virtue Positive, not Negative.* But Christian virtue is not only inward, but positive and active. "I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. v. 44–48). "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. v. 20). It is this positive aspect which is emphasised in the Catechism: "To be true and just in all my dealing: to keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity: my duty towards my neighbour is to love him as myself, and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me." It may not be out of place to note especially the positive interpretation of the tenth commandment, with the closing, much-misquoted words: "To learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it SHALL please God to call me."

The royal law for the Christian is thus an active and ever-progressive fulfilment of a positive duty. "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10). It was here that the rich young ruler failed the test.

He had kept all the commandments from his youth up, in their negative meaning; but he had never dreamt of the possible implications of an active love, and when he realised what this might involve, he was sad, and went away sorrowful, "for he had great possessions" (Matt. xix. 22). It is from the conception of Christian virtue as positive and active duty that all the social duties spring, and it is impossible for the Christian to be self-centred, and to think only of the salvation of his own soul. "He that will save his life shall lose it; and he that shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall find it" (Matt. xvi. 25).

98. It is perhaps only to be expected that it is in this highest conception of virtue that the Christian Church has most conspicuously failed. A smug respectability, conventional morality, a Pharisaic abhorrence of enthusiasm, a fear of the untrodden path, have always been the bane of the Churches, and the despair of the prophets and saints of all time. How different from the romance and adventurous daring of St. Paul (2 Cor. xi. 23–28; Rom. viii. 35–39; Eph. vi. 10–17; Phil. iii. 13–14), or the picture of the white horse in Rev. xix. 11–16: "and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness doth he judge and make war: and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

Undoubtedly there is much that is symbolic and metaphorical in this language, but there remains the fact that the early Christians felt that the most natural metaphors they could use to express the active aggressiveness of their Faith were those of war, adventure, and romance, and nothing was further from their thought than a mere negative abstinence from vice. See the list of the heroes of faith in Heb. xi., and let us remember that not all the great saints of the Church have been canonised, but that we must include also

Savonarola, Alfred, Latimer, Wycliffe, Huss, Kingsley, Wilberforce, Shaftesbury, Elizabeth Fry, Florence Nightingale, Gordon, Carey, Hannington, Mackay, and a thousand more of the active pioneers, missionaries, and reformers who have been the glory of the Christian Church.

99. *The Beginning of Virtue.* Virtue is thus shown to be an attitude of the heart and will—the deliberate choice of an inward ideal, and the devotion to it of the whole life. It is the quality of the virtue that makes the character, and it begins with the will. Now this is the idea that lies at the heart of the first word recorded of our Lord in the Gospels: "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel" (Mark i. 14–15). The word "repentance" (*metanoia*) means a change of mind. It thus goes to the root of character, and becomes the beginning of virtue. It implies a new outlook on life, a new attitude towards God and the world. The natural virtues (§ 90) in this light are not really virtues at all. Ethical virtue must be deliberate, conscious, the result of choice. And here, in the old word "repentance," when we divest it of its conventional dress, and analyse afresh its original meaning, we have the principle at the beginning of all truly moral life, the "change of mind," "whereby we forsake sin, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life" (Catechism).

CHAPTER X

SIN

100. *Its Nature.* The great problem which confronts us in all our attempts at moral progress is sin. There is in our nature an innate weakness to realise the ideal. The fact of sin is the experience of all men. "I see the better, but follow the worse." It is not our present business to seek to account for the presence and origin of sin. It is there in our nature, and we must take account of it, and understand it. What, then, is sin?

(1) *Lawlessness.* It is better to take first the most obvious form of sin—that of deliberate choice of the wrong course. "Evil, be thou my good." It has been denied that any man sins willingly. All vice, Socrates taught, was ignorance, and virtue, knowledge. What therefore seems to be conscious sin is really mere intellectual limitation—a lack of knowledge. If a man really knew the whole meaning of his action he would not do it. But this explanation does not seem sufficient to cover all experience. There is a sin which is conscious rebellion against the good, deliberate transgression of the moral law.

101. (2) *Shortcoming.* But it is not sufficient to cover the facts of experience to say that sin by its very nature is always conscious transgression. There is a great deal of truth in the teaching of Socrates that sin is blindness, ignorance. If virtue begins with conscious change of mind, then every state before repentance is a state of sin, even if unconscious. It seems absurd to say that the life of St. Paul before his conversion was not a state of sin, because, as he says: "I did it ignorantly in unbelief." Rather, he himself says he was the chief of sinners, though he had only

become conscious of sin at his conversion. Christian virtue begins in the realisation of the sense of sin, and in the conscious acceptance of one's duties as the child of God; and repentance may be called the great awakening from blindness of heart, the realisation that one has " sinned, and come short of the glory of God " (Rom. iii. 23), that one has missed the mark. In the New Testament the word for sin is both " missing the mark " (*hamartia*) and " lawlessness " (*anomia*).

There is a third word for sin in the New Testament, generally translated " trespass " (*paraptoma*), a " falling aside from the path," " a slip," " a fault." This may be regarded as sin due to weakness, rather than deliberate lawlessness, and as such is a constant part of the experience of the Christian. The word *hamartia* seems to be the more general word to cover sin of all kinds.

102. Sin therefore has both its positive and negative forms. Positively, it is deliberate guilt, conscious choice of wrong, rebellion against God, selfishness. Negatively, it is the state of moral slumber, deadness of soul, in which Satan has blinded the heart, so that we are " dead in trespasses and sins," though we are all the time unconscious of it.

It is obvious that the deliberate sin is the more serious in its effects. It is akin to that sin against the Holy Ghost of which our Lord spoke so solemnly—the wilful shutting of the eyes to the light. The guilt of conscious sin sears the conscience with so foul a stain that our Lord spoke of men being " guilty of an eternal sin " (Mark iii. 29). Whether we can speak of guilt in connection with unconscious sin opens up a very difficult subject of theology. Some writers prefer not to speak of sin at all except as conscious choice of wrong. This does not seem to satisfy the language of the New Testament. It would mean that they who crucified Christ did not sin, because they were not aware that they were doing wrong. " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." " I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your fathers " (Acts iii. 17). Ethically, we can understand

the seriousness of unconscious sin, for it is the great stumbling-block in the way of moral progress, but it is difficult to see how we can be held accountable until we have been awakened to the fact that it is sin. We must not confuse the fact of guilt with the word "sin," when that implies all action contrary to the will of God, whether its real nature is realised at the time or not.

103. It does not meet the case to speak of sins of ignorance, or even "original sin," as non-moral, as if they were altogether removed from the moral sphere, or were the products of purely natural causation. The behaviour of human beings can scarcely be called non-moral, as would the behaviour, for instance, of a dog. All the possibilities of morality are latent in human nature, even though there is a "fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam" (Art. 9). There is a moral potency in man, even though as yet he knows not the law, "by which comes the knowledge of sin" (Rom. iii. 20), and it certainly seems to be the method of the New Testament to call all that is prior to the new birth, the state of sin.

104. The coming of God to the soul is the revelation, not only of holiness, but, by contrast, sin. "Depart from me," said Peter, when he saw Jesus and heard His words, "for I am a sinful man, O Lord." The vision of Christ had for the first time revealed Peter to himself, and he suddenly realised his sinful state. The classical passage is Rom. vii. 7–17, "without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Every devotional book speaks of sin in this way. "By reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright." "Mortify and kill all vices in us." "Forgive those things whereof our conscience is afraid." "That our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body." "Behold, I was shapen in wickedness: and in sin hath my

mother conceived me" (Ps. li. 5). The question as to the guilt of such sin is dealt with rather in Rom. ii. 12–16, but this belongs rather to theology than to morals. We pass on to consider the main types of sin as recognised by Christian moralists.

105. *Types of Sin*—(1) *Venial and Mortal Sins.* St. Thomas Aquinas distinguished between venial and mortal sins, according to their guilt or punishableness. "Venial sins" are constituted by turning away to the finite without any conscious and willed turning away from God. "Mortal sins" are conscious and deliberate turning away from God. Venial sins are visited with finite punishments here and in purgatory. Mortal sins are punished with eternal punishments. They are such sins against the love of God as blasphemy, adultery, perjury, and murder.

106. (2) *The Seven Deadly Sins.* The Scholastics were fond of balancing the virtues and the vices in exact numerical proportions, and they were particularly fond of the numbers 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, and 12. In opposition to the seven cardinal virtues they placed the seven principal sins—vain-glory, envy, anger, gloom, avarice, gluttony, and lust—all springing from pride, as being the root of all evil. Each of these brings a whole army of vices in its train. The enumeration differs with different authors.

107. (3) *The World, the Flesh, and the Devil.* Perhaps the best classification of sin is that contained in the promise of renunciation in the Catechism—"the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." This three-fold division is indicated in 1 John ii. 16—"the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life"—and may be referred back to Gen. iii. 6. The story of our Lord's temptations (Matt. iv.; Lk. iv.) seems naturally to fall into the same grouping. All sin seems to be of one of these three kinds; we either gratify the bodily appetites at the expense of the higher nature, or become immersed in the vain-glory and pride of the world, or choose an evil course in the fond delusion that all will be well.

108. *Forgiveness.* When we repent, we throw ourselves on the mercy of God, and pray that His grace may help us to conquer in the battle against sin. Repentance, as we have seen, implies not merely sorrow for sins, but the resolve to live a new life. Regret and remorse are not repentance, but a change of will. But the very possibility of overcoming sins, to which we have perhaps been long habituated, implies a belief in the transforming grace of God. The sinner who repents knows of no more comforting thought than that of God's grace, to forgive and to enable. The doctrine of forgiveness has often been clouded over with theoretic difficulties as to the meaning of the Atonement. These difficulties are theological rather than practical. The sinner is satisfied if he knows, like the prodigal son returning to his father's house, that he is received into the arms of love, and restored to the communion of his Father's house. The belief in forgiveness is essential to morals, and the Atonement is best thought of in its simplest form as reconciliation, restoration to personal communion. Abstractions as to the relation between justice and mercy do not help the soul. The great thing is the realisation of the love of God. Perhaps, after all, justice and mercy are but two aspects of the same love.

BOOKS

Tennant : *Doctrine of Sin.*
Lofthouse : *Ethics and Atonement.*

CHAPTER XI

GROWTH OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

109. *Divine Grace.* In our last section we saw that it is a necessary part of Christian belief that God forgives sins. It is the belief in God's goodness and grace that gives us hope and power. In the new sense of fellowship with God that comes to the converted soul, there is hope for the time to come, an assurance that sin can be overthrown, and that our sonship with God may be perfectly realised. Grace is the first thing that is realised in the Christian life, and it is grace that sanctifies, and grace that makes perfect. The Christian life begins, continues, and ends with grace. We realise that it is not our own will that saves, nor our faith, nor anything that we do of ourselves. All comes from the love of God. He is the Source of all power, the Giver of all good. The one thing necessary, then, for progress in the Christian life is the continual realisation of our sonship with God. All else flows from this, and all that follows may be regarded as simply an expansion of this theme: "Continue ye in my love" (John xv. 9), "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. i. 27).

110. *Human Weakness.* The realisation of our own weakness, and our tendency to persist in the kind of sins that we have repented of, and that we are sure have been forgiven, is one of the most humbling experiences of life. Whatever forgiveness does, it does not break altogether the entail of our past life. It gives a new orientation to our wills, and hope gives new power in temptation. But sin has left a tendency, a fatal facility, in our natures to repeat itself, that is perhaps its most terrible consequence. As Article 9

puts it: "This infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated; whereby the lust of the flesh . . . is not subject to the Law of God." The whole of the Christian life is a battle against this inherent frailty.

111. *Habits.* But the law that makes every action facilitate further action of the same kind—terrible as it seems—is yet, rightly considered, the most beneficent of all laws; for it is the very foundation of our hope in progress. Not only bad actions go to form a habit; every virtuous action also goes to form a habit of virtue; and the very law which has seemed to the man struggling under temptation to drag him down, is the law which gives him hope that, as he conquers, so he will form the habit of conquest, and that perseverance in good habits will confirm in him the character of virtue, which one day nothing will be able to shake. The law of habit, then, which seems at first a man's greatest stumbling-block, is that which gives the highest hope of perfection, as a man perseveres in the path of sanctification.

112. *Necessity of Discipline.* It follows from what has been said that the growth of Christian character depends upon the realisation of Divine grace, the humble recognition of our own human weakness, and the use of such methods as will eradicate our faults and tend to the growth of habits of goodness.

Now it is not reasonable to expect that the attainment of a perfect character will be the growth of a day. It is a discipline, a training, an education. Goodness, if it is to be a habit, must become consolidated by constant practice. The soldier must go through arduous discipline before he is ready to face everything that a soldier may be called upon to endure. No man can expect to win a race if he has not strenuously trained himself beforehand. Education is a long and arduous process before a man can pretend to be an expert in any department of knowledge, and the more he knows the more he realises there is yet to be known. But the making of a man of unshakable good will is a task far greater than any of these, and far more

worth attempting. It is not for nothing that the Apostles continually use the metaphors of military life and the race-course. The training of the Christian character calls for the exercise of every manly quality; and if any impression has gone abroad that there is no room for manliness in the Christian life, it only shows the measure of our declension from the Christian ideal as shown in Christ, and St. Paul, the martyrs, saints, missionaries, philanthropists, reformers, emancipators, idealists, both men and women, who have been the salt of the earth, the light of the world, " of whom the world was not worthy " (Heb. xi. 38).

113. *Temptation.* The Christian life, then, cannot be one of perpetually sheltered calm. Character develops through discipline. St. James tells us to " count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh endurance; but let endurance have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing " (Jas. i. 2–4). Temptation is the training-ground of the soul. But this does not mean that we need go out of our way to seek temptations. Life will bring quite enough in the ordinary course.

> " The trivial round, the common task,
> Will furnish all we ought to ask—
> Room to deny ourselves, a road
> To bring us daily nearer God."

Our Lord taught us to pray: " Lead us not into temptation "; and if this is to be our prayer, we shall certainly not ourselves presume on God's help by unnecessarily seeking temptation. Trials will come, and we may rely on the truth of St. Paul's words: " He will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it " (1 Cor. x. 13).

114. *Character-Training.* How, then, are we to meet the temptations of the soul, through which the character becomes strengthened? It is obvious that we need the kind of training which serves best to strengthen the positive good, and to nullify the evil. No rules

can be laid down for every one, since the Christian life is free and inward, and not the following of a strict code of rules; yet there are certain general principles which will serve for all.

First, the ideal must be kept fresh and vivid before our minds, and the source of power ever kept in remembrance.

115. *Prayer.* It is difficult to see how we can keep fresh in our minds the ideal of our sonship with God save by constant meditation and prayer. In every department of life it is necessary to success, in the work we have undertaken, to keep our eyes on the end to be achieved. The scientist must not lose sight of his goal. The artist must not get so engrossed in the details of the drawing that he forgets the ideal that was in his mind. The politician must bend all his energies towards a clearly-defined end, if he is to do anything worthy in his work. How much more, then, in the building up of character is it necessary not to allow oneself to glide away down the stream of life, as a will-less straw in the current, but to realise constantly what the ideal of character is. The use of prayer, which brings us into vital touch with the infinite, is thus seen to be paralleled with that refurbishing of the ideal which every one recognises as necessary in other spheres of life.

Further, though no absolute rules can be laid down, it is in accordance with psychological law that the most effective means of attuning the mind to the highest is the practice of a daily morning watch, by which the standard may be set afresh for each day. It is here that the touchstone is set for the character, and the worshipper receives new inspiration, new strength, for the struggle of life. As the morning drill or walk acts as a tonic to the nerves and muscles, so the quiet communion of the human spirit with the Divine acts as a tonic to the whole manhood, and braces us up for the duties of life.

116. The Lord's Prayer is the model of all true prayer. It begins with the realisation of the presence and goodness of God, our Father. It lifts our minds

beyond the things of earth to see the glories of Heaven. Then, filled with heavenly radiance, we pray that our lives may be consecrated to do God's will. Not till this stage is there petition for the things we have need of on earth. Then there is the prayer for forgiveness, and for a heart that is worthy to be forgiven; "for if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. vi. 15). Then humbly we acknowledge our weakness, and pray that temptations may not be over-strong for us, and finally we pray that in all things God's strength may be with us to overcome. The Gloria sums up the three great thoughts of the prayer—God's kingdom, God's power, and God's glory.

117. It has been said that few people know how to pray. Can we do better than take the Lord's Prayer for a model? One would suggest that this prayer shall be paraphrased first of all after the method of the paraphrase in the Church Catechism; then let the worshipper pray it again in his own words, keeping to the thoughts suggested by the words. As the spirit takes hold of these seed-thoughts, it will be found that the whole of life can be covered in this way, and the whole life becomes saturated with the spirit of prayer.

118. *Meditation.* It is but a step from prayer to meditation. From the Lord's Prayer we may turn in our minds to, say, the Apostles' Creed, and ponder over the meaning of each clause, its implications, its application to ourselves, and to the world, and so each meditation turns into a prayer. In the same way, a hymn, a psalm, a parable, any chapter of the Bible, may serve as the starting-point of meditation. But it must be remembered that meditation is not the mere reading of the words, but the concentration of the mind as it revolves around a central thought, seeing it and applying it in all its manifold bearings. It is a good plan, in order to preserve freshness of thought, to read translations other than the Authorised Version of the Bible, and a language other than English will always throw new light on the text.

119. *Study.* Any one who desires to be an expert in any department of life must study his subject. Perhaps there is no subject which is more casually treated at haphazard by the majority of people than the Christian life. The character of prevalent doubts and difficulties reveals a lamentable ignorance of the elements of religion. Yet how fascinating is the story of the Bible, how illuminating the records of the Church, how inspiring the romance of the mission-fields! Not one man in a thousand could pass the most elementary examination in these subjects, and yet he will presume to criticise the story of Balaam's ass, or Lot's wife, will find fault with David, of whom he has heard as "a man after God's own heart," and will tell you that he believes in the Sermon on the Mount, but not in the Creeds, or in living a Christian life at home without bothering about the Church or the heathen abroad. One of the greatest needs of the day is more knowledge of the Christian essentials, and, to meet popular heresies and doubts, more detailed study of the Christian authorities.

One of our newspapers asks: "What is the Church going to do in the way of response to the extraordinary spirit of yearning and inquiry everywhere revealed to-day?" If this spirit of yearning and inquiry really does exist, a determined effort should be made to meet it. But, though the facilities for study and Christian knowledge were never greater than they are to-day, there are very few earnest or interested enough to avail themselves of them. The Church could do little with greater benefit than seek to create a spirit of inquiry, by lectures and study groups on the foundations of the Faith. "Thy word is a lantern unto my feet; . . . all the day long is my study in it."

120. *Public Worship.* The sanctuary of the individual soul is the citadel of the spiritual life. No outward observances can atone for the absence of spirituality in private. "God is spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." One fears that at times in our Churches the necessity of public worship has been put first, almost to the neglect

of private worship. The soul does not live in a crowd. It is always alone with God. It is in the quiet stillness that the voice of God can best be heard.

But this does not mean that there is no real value in public worship. Recent psychology has shown us how closely linked with others is each individual in the human society. No man is complete alone. The individual is not a solitary monad. His thoughts, his ideals, have all come to him through society. Unconsciously he influences, and is influenced by, others. No man liveth to himself. And the study of the psychology of crowds shows us how much an individual may be affected by the influence upon him of other spirits. The atmosphere of an election-meeting, or a prayer-meeting, is something more than the sum total of every individual's enthusiasm or earnestness. Mutual contact heightens the spiritual effect on each. It is as if a new power is born when men assemble themselves together. A thousand men, separate and singly, could not stand before half that number united and compact. Unity saves an army, and gives it strength. So the unity and co-operation of Christian men gives power and inspiration to each which they would not have alone, and consolidates the whole body for common service. It is the crudest individualism that belittles the mutual strengthening of each other in public assembly. Socialism would not grow in strength if it were deemed enough for a man to be a Socialist at home.

121. Further, the influence of regularity in public worship is not to be ignored. Even if at times we cannot easily join in the services, and there is a tendency to formality, yet the regular service is at least a strengthening of the inner habit of constant recognition of the rulership of God in our lives. Wordsworth speaks in "Tintern Abbey" of the unconscious influence of natural beauty, as giving us—

> "In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
> Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart,
> And passing even into my purer mind
> With tranquil restoration :—feelings too

> Of unremembered pleasure; such, perhaps,
> As may have had no trivial influence
> On that best portion of a good man's life—
> His little, nameless, unremembered acts
> Of kindness and of love."

Who, then, can calculate the influence on the life of the pointed roof, the organ tones, the white-robed choir, the anthems sung, the holy Book, the reverent prayers, the whole atmosphere and symbolism of the building that is set apart for the worship of God? Perhaps, after all, for the making of character, it is these more or less unconscious influences that reach furthest into the well-springs of life.

122. *Sacraments.* But there is one form of public worship which has been strangely depreciated in Protestant circles, and yet finds justification in every psychological treatise, that is, the use of the external as a means of influencing the spirit.

So long as we are in the body, and are not mere spirits separate from the body, so long will there be a mutual influence between the body and the spirit. Desire and will must find expression if they are to become real; there is no such thing as pure will, which remains entirely dissociated from the body. And the very fact of a thought being expressed in concrete form, in turn strengthens that thought or will. The concrete expression becomes the pledge and means of its continuance. The red flag, for instance, is not merely the symbol of a resolve; it is a constant incentive to renew that resolve. A badge does not merely register the fact that we have joined some society; it becomes in its turn a stimulus that reacts upon our will. The sacramental principle runs through the whole of society. The crown is not a mere symbol of royalty; the fact that he is wearing it makes King Hal a changed man. The toast is not merely a symbol of friendship and good-will; it increases it. So with the ring in marriage as a constant reminder of love, the laying-on of hands as a token that God's hand is there, the sign of the cross, the anointing oil, the tokens of broken bread and wine poured out. These

material things are not only reminders of the past; they are concrete means of grace; and the more solemn their meaning, the more do they transport us into the realms of the spirit, so that they become signs and seals of actual grace bestowed. It is not necessary for us to formulate any theory of transubstantiation to realise this. It is enough that a transmutation of values takes place within the soul, and that this transmutation is not something essentially different from any other experiences of life, but is the highest instance of a general psychological law.

123. The Christian who believes in the immanence of the spiritual can find no difficulty here, provided that he does not allow himself to be beguiled by mere theories, but realises that, as the sunset glow can be afire with God, so the sacramental symbols may be to the receptive spirit instinct with the life of the Eternal Christ.

It is in the Sacraments that this law, whereby material means may convey spiritual power, finds its fullest expression in worship. Of course, there is a danger in the thought of grace as a quasi-physical thing—and this danger has led the Quakers to suspect all external aids to worship—but the sacraments minister to a deep need of human nature, to a hunger after assurance and definiteness, and it is perhaps through the sacraments more than in any other way, that the soul is helped to realise the presence of God, and that we are not left alone to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, but "it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure." It is, then, in the sacraments that the realisation of grace bestowed upon us reaches its highest, and it is for this reason that it seems the height of folly for a man who desires his spiritual health to neglect the means whereby he may gain the greatest interior strength.

124. *Self-Knowledge.* The realisation of the ideal, and of the source of power in Divine grace, we saw to be the first essential in the training of character. Along with this, we must recognise our own weakness,

in order to know how to strengthen the good, and eradicate the bad. We must learn to know ourselves. No method of self-discipline can be laid down to suit all natures. It has always been the curse of systematic discipline that while a certain course may be good for some natures, to others it may be positively harmful. It is obvious that men should know their own peculiarities of temperament, inherited weaknesses, or habitual faults. A certain amount of self-examination is needed to this end, but for some natures there is a great danger in introspection, as it easily becomes all-absorbing and morbid. A great deal of the usual Lenten preaching and hymns is positively harmful to some temperaments. It is not necessary to self-knowledge to be morose. One of the benefits of friendship is to have the advantage of the candid criticism of an *alter ego*. A faithful friend or a discerning wife may often detect faults which would otherwise go unnoticed, and should be able to know how to temper wisely criticism with encouragement.

125. *Self-Discipline.* Given, then, the realisation of the ideal and an adequate self-knowledge, it then becomes necessary to find means for developing the good and eliminating the faulty. No natural or acquired disposition is beyond correction. Even in the case of those dispositions which we call natural instincts in animals, it has often been shown how, by careful training, they may be eliminated. A dog and a cat may play together, a hen will get accustomed to her strange foster-ducklings, wild animals can be tamed, the instinct of fear in others completely overcome.[1] It is a matter of common observation how an acquired vice, such as drunkenness, gambling, miserliness, may crush out all the natural tendencies to good-nature, love of children, and desire for comfort. In the same way, the development of a good habit crushes out the evil. Evil is not eradicated by the foolish method of expelling a vice and trying to create a vacuum, but by what Dr. Chalmers called "the expulsive power of a new affection." This is the lesson of

[1] Murray, *Handbook of Christian Ethics*, p. 295.

the chamber that was "swept and garnished" in Matt. xii. 44. A new enthusiasm, a new incentive in life, sweeps out of a man everything that stands in its way. We have only to observe the young man in love, the new recruit in the army, the newly ordained, the enthusiastic convert, to see how, under the power of a new outlook and the necessity for new habits of life, many of the old habits, even those which seemed to be the strongest, suddenly atrophy and die.

126. *Formation of Habits.* What every man requires, then, is to find the means whereby he may train himself into new habits. The process by which habits are formed may be studied fully in books of psychology, and this is important for all who wish either to train themselves or to teach others. Briefly, the way to acquire a habit is by practice. Constant practice promotes facility in performance as it comes more and more under the law of association or suggestion. Education largely consists in forming associations of ideas, so that they may be recalled by suggestion. How, then, does the law of association act? It depends upon the intensity and frequency of the impression.

127. (1) *Intensity.* A great experience, either of internal decision, or of external circumstance, does not easily fade, and sets up lines of association in every direction. One who has been in a great battle will never forget it, and on the smallest provocation of sound or sight it will be vividly recalled. A soldier who had suffered from shell-shock was sent at once into a fright on hearing the peace-salutes nearly two years after. A scene at a death-bed will be recalled by the sight of any article that belonged to the dying person. A sudden conversion makes such an impression that every resolve comes home with power when old temptations are faced again, and it is marvellous how complete and sudden the break with the old life may be.

128. (2) *Frequency.* But time obliterates all things, and the persistence of a resolve will depend upon its frequent renewal. One may cram for an examination and forget it all in a few weeks; but if that study is

taken up again in a time of leisure, and is allowed time to make its impression, it may become an acquisition for life. So with a new moral habit. At first it may require an effort to keep it up, but after a prolonged course of resolute persistence it becomes so easy as to be almost a second nature. Hence the importance of regular repetition of an act that one desires to become habitual. The more recent an action was, the easier it is to repeat it.

129. *Fasting and Penance.* At times it is necessary for every one, especially if the will is weak, to take drastic action for the amendment of particular habits which are very hard to break. Our Lord spoke of the necessity at times for cutting off the hand or foot or plucking out the eye, in order that the whole body might not be destroyed. Religious societies have often devised schemes of exercises for the development of the moral life under the names of fasting and penance. Fasting is abstinence from something which is in itself allowable, but of which we deny ourselves simply for the purpose of training the will in the power of self-denial. Penance is the endurance of a pain or hardship which is not called for by the immediate duty of the moment, but which is undertaken for the specific purpose of schooling the will to endure pain or hardship in the performance of duty. But there are two principles which alone can make fasting and penance effective in their object. They must be voluntary, and they must be secret. If they are not voluntary, but simply imposed by external authority, they may retard the moral life by making it appear simply obedience to a code of laws. The system of Indulgences does not strengthen, but rather weaken the will. Again, our Lord's condemnation of the ostentatious fasting of the Pharisees shows that if fasting and penance are not secret, they may only minister to personal vanity and display, rather than to the humility of true morality.

Of course there are times when it is necessary to seek the help of another in the training of the will, but, in general, these two principles are so important that they must be very jealously guarded.

130. *Asceticism.* When fasting and penance become regarded as an end in themselves rather than a means to the development of the spiritual life, we have what is commonly understood as asceticism. Abstinence and sacrifice have now become lauded as in themselves good and desirable, and many of the pleasures and innocent activities of life are regarded as in themselves evil. Hence the repulsive features of monasticism, and the unattractive gloominess of the Puritans. Asceticism may be defined as the abuse of self-discipline —the morbid disease of the mind absorbed in a too exclusive scrutiny of the lower passions of human nature. It is the very opposite of that self-forgetting love of God which is the characteristic mark of the true disciple of Christ. Morbid self-analysis is like the perpetual sweeping-out of an empty room; Christian love is the admitting of the pure sunlight into the soul.

131. *Confession and Advice.* It is the abuse of an external disciplinary system that has created the evils connected with auricular confession, but this should not make us rush to the opposite extreme, and blind us to the fact that there are dangers also in making religion a matter purely of the individual. There are many who are not capable of judicious self-examination, or who are doubtful of the matters in which they specially need moral training, or of the methods by which they may eliminate bad, and cultivate good, habits of life. Much can be done by sympathetic friends to help the doubtful and the weak, but there will always be some who by nature are more sympathetic and discerning to whom an anxious seeker should be able to apply for help without feeling he is thereby doing something which is supposed to be wrong. It has been one of the weaknesses of Protestant religion that this need of human nature has not been sufficiently allowed for. At the same time, it would appear that every minister of the Church is not, either by nature or by training, fitted for the delicate task of individual ministry. The Church should rather set apart a number of its ministers, carefully equipped for the

work, as spiritual advisers, to whom difficult cases of conscience could be referred.

132. *Casuistry.* The science of casuistry, or the study of cases of conscience, has unfortunately fallen into grave disrepute. This is owing to the meticulous detail in which the casuists of the Middle Ages indulged in reference to the disciplinary systems of their times. It is a study which can easily degenerate into mere dialectical trifling, but nevertheless is in itself useful and in fact necessary. Every man knows what it is to balance in his own mind the virtues of two courses, both of which seem right, and yet mutually contradictory. Or if two courses alone are possible, and both seem wrong, what is the right path to pursue? Or, again, what is to be done if the way that appears to be right involves a greater evil than the way that appears to be wrong? Such questions are of frequent occurrence in life, and their application to different circumstances makes their answer not always easy to decide. It is in these cases where experience, sympathetic understanding, and, above all, spirituality count, and it seems impossible to expect that an inexperienced and untrained individual can resolve a case with the same sureness of touch as one who has made conscience his life-long study.

133. *Service.* We have been tracing the process of the self-realisation of the Christian. Conscious of the Divine ideal, and conscious of his own nature, the Christian uses the methods that are necessary for the training of his character in accordance with the ideal set before him. But we have already seen (§ 82) that the individual is not to be regarded as a self-contained unit. He is a member of a society, and he can never reach his ideal by pre-occupation with himself, but only as he realises his part in the whole society of which he is a member. We have still to treat of that department of Christian morality in which an individual goes out beyond himself, and finds the completion of his own life in the love and service of others. Our duty towards God is not complete unless it issues forth in our duty towards our neighbour. "He that

loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John iv. 20). Love is the crown of the Christian virtues, and knowledge, faith, almsgiving, penance, without love, profit us nothing (1 Cor. xiii.).

134. The next part, therefore, is not to be regarded as separate from the personal ideal, but as an integral part of the realisation of the Christian character. The Christian finds his fulfilment in service. "He who loveth God must love his brother also" (1 John iv. 21).

BOOKS

Illingworth: *Christian Character.*
Kilpatrick: *Christian Character.*
James: *Talks to Teachers.*
Black: *Friendship.*
Black: *Self-Culture.*
Kidd: *The Science of Power.*
Drummond: *The Ideal Life.*
McDougall: *Social Psychology.*
Ames: *The Psychology of Religious Experience.*

PART III

SOCIAL MORALITY

CHAPTER XII

THE SOCIAL IDEAL

135. *The Social Teaching of Christ.* Christianity is not individualistic. It lays stress on the importance of the individual character, but only for the sake of the world. It would be impossible to recognise the New Testament (to say nothing of the Old Testament, of which the New is the completion and fulfilment), if its social teaching could be excised. Our Lord began His teaching with the declaration "The kingdom of God is at hand"; and His last words, as recorded in St. Matthew, are: "Go ye and make disciples of all the nations." His disciples are not to retire from the world in solitary seclusion, but to be the light, the salt, the leaven in the world. Our duty to God is only completed by our duty to our neighbour: "Love thy neighbour as thyself."

136. It seems strange that Christianity should have been attacked on the grounds that it was too individualistic. Yet the accusation undoubtedly had justification in the past history of the Church. In the last few centuries, as well as in earlier periods of the Church, the social teaching of Christianity has been largely obscured, and there is now a strong reaction to emphasise the social teaching of Christ above everything else, as if Jesus were primarily a demagogue, a social reformer, the pioneer of a new order. What has been already said will show that this is an altogether inadequate

reading of the life and teaching of Christ. His social teaching was the necessary outcome of religion, and his teaching on the Kingdom of God can in no way be separated from His spiritual ideal.

137. *Witness of the Early Church.* It would be easy to show that the social teaching of Christ was always recognised by the early Church as an integral part of the Gospel. "Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" "If we are fellow-sharers in that which is imperishable, how much more in things perishable?" (*Didache*). "Learn that to others is lacking that wherein ye superabound. Be ashamed of holding fast what belongs to others. Imitate God's equity, and none shall be poor" (*Preaching of Peter*). "He who possesses on earth and shares his returns and fruits with the brotherhood, is an imitator of God the Father" (Cyprian). "It is a matter of justice that a man keep not for himself alone what was intended by God for the good of all" (Ambrosiaster). "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. v. 8).

138. It seems strange that there ever was a time when the Church seemed to regard the severance from all earthly ties and duties as the highest mark of a saint. The admiration for men like St. Simeon the Stylite seems to us the very opposite of the New Testament teaching. The admiration of the anchorite or cœnobite can best be explained by the introduction of pagan ideas into the Church. There is no justification in the New Testament for a life withdrawn from the world. Many, no doubt, withdrew from the highest motives, and one can believe that the monasteries performed a useful service to the world in witnessing to the surpassing value of spiritual things; yet, nevertheless, the Church of the fourth and fifth centuries seems to have imbibed more of the spirit of the Manichæan East than is commonly recognised.

139. Christianity does not despise the world. "God

saw all things that He had made, and behold, they were very good." It is the mission of Christianity to redeem the world, not to condemn; and in the New Testament it is realised that we are mutually dependent upon one another. Man is by nature a social being, and his life is to be given in service to his fellows. Only by love can a man save his own soul. The selfish seeking of salvation for oneself alone is utterly contrary to the whole spirit of Christ.

140. The Christian Church has not yet altogether grasped the full ideal. Perhaps it was necessary that the great idea of the value of the individual soul should be emphasised before the full ideal of corporate salvation could be realised. Even now, in these days of emphasis on social duty, it is necessary over and over again to insist that society was made for man, and not man for society. The balance of life must be kept. But while we bear in mind the teaching of our Lord as to the infinite value of the individual soul, we must go on to the fullness of the truth, and realise that the initial doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood necessarily implies the unity and the brotherhood of man.

141. *The Social Ideal.* What, then, is the social ideal of Christianity? It is the community of the children of God. "No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." "We are members one of another." The final ideal of salvation is a Kingdom, a society of the children of God, in which humanity is united in loyalty to its Divine Head, and in which every aspect of human life reaches its perfection. It is the individual ideal made corporate—the realisation of the true purpose and nature of society as the Commonwealth of God.

142. *The Kingdom of God.* There has been a great deal of discussion as to the exact meaning of the phrase "the kingdom of God" or "the kingdom of heaven" in the Gospels. It has been variously identified with the Church, the Messianic Kingdom expected by the Jews, the Kingdom of Apocalyptic expectations, or the diffusion of the Christian spirit

in the world. It has been regarded as external and internal, economic and spiritual, sudden and gradual, a past growth and a future climax. It is truly comprehensive of all these. That which grows within the heart of man is none the less truly the gift of God; that which captures the spirit must rule in the economic sphere as well; that which grows by slow processes of evolution ultimately manifests itself in catastrophic change; that which is perfect in its future manifestation is nevertheless prepared for slowly by all the ages past. The Christian spirit can only grow by the faithfulness of the Church to its mission. The kingdom of the prophets may be regarded either in its human aspect or as coming down from above. God works in every process of human life; all history is the record of His footprints; yet the results of hidden processes are often revealed suddenly at the end. External events are but the outcome of hidden thoughts of the soul. We can only understand the Kingdom of God as we realise that every thought and word and deed of man, his private life and his public duties, are all to be brought into relation with the omnipresent spirit of God. The Christian ideal is that God's will shall be supreme in the whole of human life, and that earth is to be the reflection of heaven, in order that this life may be perfected in the eternal life of the world to come. The Kingdom of Heaven is thus not fully perfected on earth. Its full perfection lies in the spiritual world. But our duty as the children of God is to translate the eternal, heavenly realities into terms of earthly life, in order that earth may be the counterpart of heaven, and find its full perfection at last in the eternal order.

BOOKS

Peabody : *Jesus Christ and the Social Question.*
Martensen : *Christian Ethics* (*Social*).
Brock : *What is the Kingdom of God ?*
Cunningham : *The Secret of Progress.*
Chadwick : *Social Relationships in the Light of Christianity.*
Dobschultz : *Christian Life in the Primitive Church.*
Maurice : *Epistles of St. John* (*Studies in Christian Ethics*).
Westcott : *Social Aspects of Christianity.*
Gore : *The Sermon on the Mount.*
Gardner : *Evolution in Christian Ethics.*
Temple : *The Kingdom of God.*

CHAPTER XIII

THE FAMILY

143. *The Family as the Basis of Society.* The basis of human society is the family, and it will be found that the family is the norm and type of all that society should be. As we investigate the beginnings of society, we find that society began in the necessity of caring for the young. There is no evidence that human society began by a mere contract between individuals. If that had been so, there would be no necessary stability in human society, for that which began with a voluntary contract could end with voluntary anarchy. Society rather began and continues by an inherent necessity, and it has grown out of the fact that the young of the human species are not at birth able to care for themselves, but, in contrast with the young of other species, must be cared for through months and years of infancy. It is this necessity for the care of the children that brings with it the genesis of society and its underlying law. There is no society among the lower animals because there is no real family.

144. It is probable that the matriarchal group preceded the patriarchal type. The woman with her children created a more or less coherent group among wandering and predatory males. But it was not long before the unity of the family was determined, in most tribes, not by reference to the woman, but by the supremacy of the man. It is not necessary here to touch on many of the forms through which the evolution of the family has moved, but it is generally acknowledged that monogamous marriage is the highest form, and that towards which all previous evolution tended. The questions which agitate the

modern world concerning marriage and the family should be considered in the light of the long story of social evolution, for it is hardly likely that the future progress of the race can belie the past.

Those who believe in God cannot think that progress can ever be a reversal of history, and it is scarcely in accordance with the tendency of modern science to think that anything can happen but by slow evolution out of already existing conditions. There may be many things in our existing social conditions which require changing, but to say, as Bebel did, that "Marriage is so closely associated with the existing social status that it stands or falls with it," is scarcely in accordance with history or science. If this were so, it would be all to the advantage of the existing social status. It appears to be simply a confusion of thought based on the uncritical acceptance of the contract-theory of Rousseau. Marriage is the foundation of society, but this does not mean that the existing social status cannot be materially altered without cutting away the roots of all society.

145. Social theory must begin with a right understanding of human nature as it is, and there is no fact more deeply rooted in human nature than the dependence of the child on its mother, and that not merely economically, but vitally, for nurture, for personal care, for human interest, and love; and there is no fact that can be ignored with less impunity than the mutual dependence on one another of men and women, not only for physical comfort, but also for spiritual enrichment and growth. If human beings could be treated merely as animals, with physical needs only, it would be easy to reconstruct society on the principles of a stud farm, but economic comfort is only one of the needs of men and women. Man does not live by bread alone, and society cannot fulfil its true purpose if bread alone is considered. The bond of society must be something more fundamental to human nature, a more spiritual link; and that bond is found in love, co-operating for the good of the whole; and it is in the family that that principle has been learned. If

the family were dissolved, as Bebel and his school suggest, should we have any guarantee that the whole principle of love would not be lost?

Christianity shows itself more truly in accordance with the teaching of science, by taking the individual indeed as the unit of worth, but by taking the family as the ultimate unit of society. All society has grown, and must still grow, out of the family, until the principle of the family—human love—becomes the principle governing the whole world.

146. According to our Lord's teaching, the family is the reflex in human nature of our relations with God. God is our Father, from whom every fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named. We are the children of God, and every picture of our relations with God is based on the relations of the child with his father or mother. Is there any principle, again, which could be used to cement mankind together stronger than the principle of brotherhood? It would be a poor substitute to put enlightened self-interest in its place, yet that appears to be the only possible principle of union if the principle of brotherhood were lost, and this depends entirely on the preservation of the family.

It is only those who have touched the heights of spiritual love who can at all understand that other inspired picture, in which wedded love is made the image of the relations of the soul with the heavenly Bridegroom, and the unity of Heaven and Earth is depicted under the image of the Marriage-feast. In the light of this picture, it is not possible for a Christian to think of marriage as a mere contract of convenience or temporary union, still less as a condition of slavery and dependence. It becomes spiritualised; it is the very type of unity of soul; it is by its essential nature life-long, indissoluble, the home of mutual service, yet of perfect freedom, where love has broken down all thought of selfishness or servitude; it is faithful devotion to the end; it tolerates no thought of separation; it is the union with another self—a sacramental communion.

147. *The Family and Law.* If family life approached

the Christian ideal there would be no controversy about its value, and no desire to destroy it. The fact is, unfortunately, that the ideal of a union of perfect love and mutual service is beyond the reach of most men, and the family—which should be the realm of pure love—has had to be guarded and hedged about with the strictest possible laws. In every society, the marriage laws have always been the strictest of all, as if mankind has instinctively felt that here was its most precious heritage, to tamper with which was ruin. As the family is the beginning of society, so the protective laws which grew around the family were the beginning of all law. It is natural perhaps, therefore, that those who gird at the present laws, when they observe how deeply rooted these are in the laws which have grown up round the family, confusedly transfer their animus to the institution of the family rather than to the abuse of the laws. Let us rather, first of all, make sure of the true ideal; then we can examine how far our laws are conducive to the maintenance of that ideal.

148. For this is the purpose of law—to protect, maintain, and mould the ideal, not to crush it, or to become a substitute for it. If there is real love between a man and a woman, they do not need to be told that they must avoid adultery, or cruelty, and so on; nor, if they love their children, do they need to be told that they must feed, clothe, and educate them; nor do brothers and sisters need a policeman to tell them not to molest one another, not to steal, not to murder, or not to tell lies. Laws are only introduced as offences come. They are the marks of human weakness, and show how far short men come of the ideal. But they have also been the sign-posts which show what is expected of men, and danger-signals to point out where society may make shipwreck. The purpose of law is always that of being our instructor to lead us to higher things, just as St. Paul taught that the Mosaic Law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. So far from law being, as some have said, an evil thing, it is to law that we owe most of our

progress in civilisation. It is possible for us to imagine a perfect society without law, but only when law has become so ingrained in our nature as to have become transmuted into an inward principle of right. It is not possible to imagine an imperfect society without law, in which every man should do that which is right in his own eyes, for society would then soon slip back into barbarism, and the whole process of the ages would have been in vain. The teaching of St. Paul on the Mosaic Law leading to the inward law of Christ, applies not only to religion, but to all civilisation. The perfect ideal of the inward law is the ideal of the Kingdom of God—in which the Divine laws are written, not on tables of stone, but on the fleshy tables of the heart—but the Kingdom of God is not the annulment and abolition of all laws, but the perfect inward fulfilment of them. "I came not to destroy, but to fulfil."

149. In approaching, therefore, the consideration of the laws of human society, we must bear in mind the transitory, changing character of all external laws, and seek to find and express in external laws the abiding ideals for the upholding of which laws exist. The abiding things in human life, such as marriage, the family, the community, are not to be dissolved and disintegrated, but preserved in the fullness of their ideal by such laws as are necessary from time to time to preserve the ideal intact. The law itself cannot be abrogated until its inward purpose has been fulfilled.

150. *Marriage.* It is noteworthy that our Lord only once departed from His general policy of avoiding explicit references to the external institutions of society, and that was in His teaching with regard to marriage. In striking contrast to the prevailing laxity of His time—whether amongst Jews or heathen—He emphasised the ideal indissolubility of the marriage tie by reference to its place in the fundamental constitution of the world: "From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his

wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mark x. 6–9). In our Lord's teaching, sex was an integral factor of human nature, and monogamous marriage was a necessary institution of society, which could not be dissolved as long as life should last, except possibly (if Matt. v. 32 is original; cp. Mark x. 11, where there is no exception) for a cause which may be taken to be in its very nature a dissolution. In this teaching, marriage becomes a moral and spiritual relationship, not primarily a physical union. It is the voluntary adoption of a relationship as real as that of parent and child, brother and sister, and no more to be dissolved than these can be. As a moral relationship, it brings with it not only its privileges, but its corresponding duties and responsibilities, and is no more to be annulled by selfish surfeit or by hardships than a son can be renounced who runs counter to all his father's wishes. The erring husband, the faithless wife, is to be as much an object of undying love as the prodigal son in a far country.

151. It will be seen how far Jesus lifts the subject of sex out of the ordinary levels of thought. By moralising sex into a source of duty, Jesus cuts at the root of all the evils with which society is honeycombed on this subject. Adultery, fornication, prostitution, are not so much as to be thought of by those who realise that they are the children of God, and vicegerents of His creative power. It is only when men forget their heritage, and think of themselves as little better than the brutes, that they can speak of these things as physically necessary or incapable of being avoided. It is a degrading materialistic philosophy that regards marriage as purely animal and physical, that seeks to annul the laws which emphasise its indissolubility. Men who are made in the image of God—but a little lower than the angels—have power to avoid what they know to be evil, and must not degrade themselves to the brutes. The laws therefore against the sins of the flesh are for a witness to what man should be, and so

far from taking away his freedom, free him from the tyranny of his own lusts.

152. *Divorce.* But though the Christian ideal is undoubtedly that of the indissolubility of marriage, and though our laws should be a standing witness to the ideal, yet it has to be acknowledged that the ideal of marriage is often very far from being reached. Does Christian morality therefore allow of any exceptions? Is divorce ever to be permitted? There are those who exalt the ideal of Christ into an unbreakable law, and would allow no exceptions within the Christian Church. But it has to be remembered that there is a great difference between an ideal principle, and the possibility in a varied community of maintaining that ideal inviolate. The State has to make the best of society as it is, and while it seeks to preserve the purity of the ideal, it must make allowances for exceptional cases. The Law of Moses was not wrong in allowing divorce "for the hardness of your heart" (Mark x. 5); Christ only showed that the ideal was above the dispensation of the law. If we allow divorce in the State law, we must do it confessedly as an accommodation to the hardness of men's hearts. It does not alter the ideal. A divorce law does not make void the normal ideal of the marriage law; it is only a confession that we have come short of the ideal. No one desires divorce for its own sake; confessedly there has been something faulty; and divorce is merely an allowance to human weakness. Human law is always an accommodation in this sense, and to allow the operation of a law to diminish hardship cannot be said by any means to invalidate the Divine law or principle.

153. As to the reasons which should call for relaxation of the strictness of the Christian ideal we need not here go into detail. Suffice it to say that in the Report of the Divorce Commission of 1912 the Commissioners unanimously declared in favour of two principles—the equalisation of the position of the sexes as regards the grounds of divorce, and the

extension of equal facilities to the poor as to the rich. If, as the Minority Report said, "the repeal of the existing Divorce Acts, even if desirable, is not practicable," then the increase or decrease of the number of causes justifying divorce is rather a question of expediency than of principle.

154. As to the position in the Church of those who have been divorced, it seems only reasonable that the Church should have liberty to exercise discipline over its own members in accordance with its own principles, in the interests of the State itself, and certainly no clergyman ought to be under any legal obligation to solemnise the marriage of a divorced person, however strong his personal conviction may be against it. But can a divorced person, who has received the dispensation of the law, be regarded as such a "notorious evil liver" that, *ipso facto*, he is to be debarred for ever from the communion of the Church? It does not seem quite in accordance with the mind of our Lord that the Church should set up this sin above all other breaches of the moral law as absolutely unforgivable and excommunicatory. In St. Paul's list of the unrighteous who "shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. vi. 9–10), among the fornicators and idolaters and adulterers, he includes "thieves, and covetous, and drunkards, and revilers, and extortioners; and such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified." The exaggerated emphasis on the sin of adultery does not seem to square with our Lord's own attitude towards the woman taken in adultery: "Neither do I condemn thee. Go, and sin no more." In our Lord's eyes the sins of covetousness and Pharisaism were far more hurtful to the soul than the sins of the flesh.

155. *Re-marriage.* This brings us to the question of the re-marriage of divorced persons, which is not necessarily the same as that of divorce. It might be possible to allow divorce without re-marriage. But what has been said of the expediency of divorce applies here also. The conditions are not ideal, and the

Church should not be required in such cases to repeat its own marriage service, which has been obviously broken. But though re-marriage is not ideal, the law of the State has to make the best of conditions as they are, and there seems no valid reason why the Church, providing it has its own internal liberty for the discipline of its members, should seek to impose its own discipline upon the State, which has to consider the general welfare of all its citizens. The Church should use its influence so that relaxations are not made too easily, but it must not expect that the ideal can be reached in a day. The duty of the Church is to uphold the ideal by its own witness, but to be merciful where that ideal is broken. It should try to effect that, as far as possible, the State protects the Christian ideal, by making the right easy, and transgression hard.

156. *The Home.* The reason why it is necessary to be so careful on the subject of marriage is because marriage is not an end in itself, but a means to a wider end. The primary end of marriage is not the happiness of the persons married, but the founding of a home, and the welfare of the children is the paramount consideration. Nothing that interferes with the integrity of the home can be permanently good for the nation. It is in the home that religion is unconsciously imbibed, where parent and child become the picture on earth of the Divine Fatherhood, even where religion is not explicitly taught. It is in the home that the first lessons of love are learned, and where the ideas of mutual service and brotherhood are imbibed for use in the wider sphere of the world. The home is the microcosm of all society.

157. It is not sufficient that a child shall be fed and clothed and educated. Human character and personality can only grow in the atmosphere of parental love. No foster-parent or teacher can take the place of the father and mother. Every institution that is trying to develop the character of orphan children or waifs is finding the necessity of providing some

kind of home-life rather than that of an institution. Every law must be judged by its effect on the home, for it is only by the full development of the natural powers under natural conditions that society as a whole can be humanised. On the preservation or otherwise of all that home means, civilisation stands or falls.

CHAPTER XIV

THE STATE

158. *Its Origin and Nature.* Investigation into the origin of civilisation shows that the State has arisen in the course of development from the family. The primitive family was the original unit of society; from that arose in due succession the clan, the tribe, the nation or the State. The State is the family writ large. In the wider orbit of government we shall therefore expect to find the same principles, only on a wider scale, as those which govern the family. This is also the Christian idea. The State, no more than the family, is a result of the contract of individuals. It is not an agglomeration of units; it is in itself a unity. Its laws are not merely the recorded agreements of majorities; they are in essence paternal. It was not for nothing that kings were often called the fathers of their country, and that the Romans called their senators fathers. The representatives of the nation should be in a position of paternal authority. It is a theory that has no justification in history to regard the State as a mere combination of individuals, existing to guarantee individual freedom. The very conception of society involves the limitation of the rights of individuals for the common good.

159. Law is the common authority to bind individuals into a cohesive whole. The anarchist is one who proclaims his independence of society, and society has no room for anarchists. The progress of civilisation is the progress from anarchy to law. Philosophical anarchy may claim that if the good-will of all is won, that good-will may supersede law; but this claim is based upon the assumption of a condition

which does not exist in society as we know it, and the office of practical government is to recognise things as they are, and to seek to promote that good-will or true patriotism which is manifestly lacking in so many of its citizens. Exactly how that patriotism may be best promoted is a matter of dispute; but the necessity of some kind of law, with some kind of compelling force, should be obvious to all.

160. *The State and the Individual.* Whatever form the State may assume, it must exercise a certain measure of authority over the individual. In the autocratic days of the past, this authority was exercised by the king, emperor, or sovereign ruler; it is nowhere accepted to-day that any individual is sufficiently wise, however benevolent in intention, absolutely to control the destinies of his subjects. The course of history has been a progressive devolution of sovereign power to chosen representatives of the people. Even a Solomon had his chosen counsellors; the Greeks had their elders; the Romans their senators. To-day we have our democratic representatives in the councils of all nations. The most democratic assembly the world has known has given supreme power into the hands of its chosen rulers. The forms of government may change; but the principle remains the same—the ruling power is supreme. Its decisions are to be the laws of the people, and those laws are to be upheld with all the sanctions of authority.

161. It is difficult to see how otherwise there can be any unity in society at all. If every individual were a law unto himself, no community could exist. This communal unity involves the risk of injustice; it means that often an individual who is wiser than the rest may be suppressed. But the Christian religion, nevertheless, though it has suffered most from communities stronger than itself, yet teaches the necessity of obedience, or at least of submission to an authority which in its essence is of Divine institution (cp. Rom. xiii. 1–7).

The popular theory that because the good is often submerged, at least for a time, under the weight of

evil, the theory of government and law breaks down, and must give way to absolute individual freedom, is a negation of history, and the apotheosis of pessimism. The best does not always come out top immediately, but the true believer knows that the right will in the end prevail, and "he that believeth will not make haste." Still less will the man of faith seek to undo the whole of the past, and try to rebuild society again from its foundations. Our Lord and the early Christians did not preach anarchy and revolution because they were persecuted. They knew that, in spite of, or even through, the Cross, the cause of God would ultimately prevail.

162. *Politics.* Politics is the application of the principles of government in the affairs of State. To the Christian it is the political application of Christian ethics. It was a strange disbelief in the possibility of the redemption of human society that made men say that a Christian should have nothing to do with politics. It is as if one should say that Christian principles have nothing to do with the family. If sex were altogether evil, and the only thing a Christian could do were to retire to a hermitage, then there could be no such thing as Christian morality outside of the culture of the individual soul. But if these Manichæan notions are cast out, then Christian ethics must be seen to have its bearings on the whole of human life, and the family and the State and international affairs must be brought under the rule of the Christian ethic. Christianity cannot hand over any part of God's world to the devil, or treat anything human as alien from it.

163. There has been in recent years a growing appreciation of this fact, but it cannot be said to have been yet fully grasped in all its implications by the Church at large. Politics has been so long regarded as outside the control of Christianity, that there is a great deal yet to be done before Christian ethics can be said to be really a dominating power. Politics and economics have been controlled by a morality of their own, borrowed from materialism and evolutionary philo-

sophy, rather than from Christianity, and those who have sought to apply their religion in the political and commercial worlds have been scouted as sentimentalists and unpractical dreamers. It is one of the greatest tasks of this generation to show how Christian principles can be applied in every department of human life—in the directing of education, the ennobling of recreation, the purification of the home, the distribution of the wealth of the community, the humanising of industry and commerce, the utilisation of science and art. In the enriching of life whether in town or country, within the nation or in the wider sphere of world-politics, the Christian faith must be applied in its relation to all the needs of men. It is only possible here to indicate very briefly some of the ways in which Christian ethics may be applied.

164. *Education.* It is obvious that our whole idea of education will be affected by the aims and ideals we set before us. The Christian will set before himself the ideal of a noble personal character and a useful citizen. Character to him involves religion, and somehow or other, he will aim at getting religion accepted as a necessary part of education. It has always been a controversial matter in England as to how far religion should be taught in the schools, but there are signs of a concordat being reached. The principle that should surely govern is that the public education authorities should be regarded, for the time the children are under their care, purely *in loco parentis.* It is not for the authorities to refuse the opportunity of religious education if the people demand it; it is for them to think out the best way in which the public demands can be met, provided always that the State is satisfied that the children in no way suffer.

165. Secondly, if the State requires useful citizens, it must obviously so arrange its educational system that it not only conduces to the building up of character, but also is adequate for the purpose in view. Christianity requires the full development of the whole manhood, and therefore of necessity must treat the

children, not as mere tools of industry, but as human personalities, fitted to take their place in the counsels of the nation. If the poverty of the parents makes it impossible for them to provide sufficient facilities for the adequate education of their children, then, by the integral principle of the State, it must see that the children are adequately provided for. The bearing of this on juvenile employment, continued education, secondary schools, maintenance scholarships, and university possibilities for all who are specially fitted for higher education, will be at once seen.

166. *Recreation.* What has been said with regard to the mind applies all the more urgently with regard to the physique of the people. "You cannot expect an A1 nation from a C3 population." Is any sight so pathetic as to see our children reduced to playing in the city slums, when they might be out among all the recuperative powers of God's fresh air, and sunshine, and fields? But it is not only the children who suffer from the cramped conditions of our normal city-life. The mothers want more room if they are to be healthy and "joyful mothers of children." The young men need better opportunities for play; the young women more healthy avenues of pleasure. The fathers would be happier and better fathers if they could be in their allotment-gardens instead of having to spend their evenings in the public-houses. Science might become a sport, and art a recreation, if opportunities for these were made more common. We spend more money on art education in one year than Italy spent during the whole of the fourteenth century, yet that was the most glorious era of Italian art. We have lost the soul for beauty because we have commercialised it, and the people have no leisure to cultivate it out of the pure joy of living. Recreation and leisure, like cleanliness, are very near to godliness. "The voice of joy and health is in the dwellings of the righteous."

167. *The Homes of the People.* In turning to the dwellings of the people in this land of teeming wealth, one is almost ashamed to speak of some of the dens in which people dwell, as homes, except that one knows

how wonderfully at times men and women can triumph over the grimiest conditions. It is not possible here to go into all the ramifications of the housing problem, except to point out the moral necessity of decent homes if we are to expect a decent people. It is impossible to calculate how much drunkenness, gambling, immorality, crime, and disease could be saved if only men and women had the chance to bring up their children in surroundings which would be conducive to better things. To the social worker it is a perpetual marvel how the poor manage to live at all, until he remembers that in some of our Lancashire towns the infantile death-rate reaches the abnormal figure of 220 per thousand. If so many die within the first twelve months of life, how many must there be who only just manage to live, and who are handicapped from their earliest days by the innumerable ailments so familiar to the school medical officers! From the economic standpoint alone, the provision of decent homes would be a profitable investment for the community.

168. It is not only that the houses in themselves must be clean and sanitary and adequate for the rearing of a family; they must have space and beauty. The overcrowding of houses together is as bad as overcrowding inside; and the growth of garden cities shows what can be done by careful planning to get rid of the soul-destroying monotony and ugliness of our streets. It is not as if the country were so densely populated that there is no room for the people. The countryside in many parts is lying desolate and waste, and cottages have been destroyed by the thousand to make room for grouse-hunting and sport. There is room and wealth in plenty; it is the conscience of the people that is dormant. Ruskin said that wealth is welfare, and that "wealth" which does not minister to the welfare of the people was "ill-th"; "That country is richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings: that man is richest who, having perfected the functions of his own life to the utmost, has also the widest helpful influence,

both personal and by means of his possessions, over the lives of others." If wealth is life, how far we are short of the true wealth the present condition of the homes of the people only too lamentably reveals.

169. *Wealth and Poverty.* (1) *Urgency of the Question.* The consideration of the homes of the people thus brings us to the heart of the social question—the right use of wealth, and the relation between riches and poverty. There is nothing to-day that is being more thought about than this; and there is nothing that is being more questioned from the standpoint of Christian ethics than the conventional standards of so-called Christian society. It has been for so long an accepted thing that Christianity need not interfere with wealth, that there has grown up in Christian countries an idea that the differences between wealth and poverty must be accepted as part of the constitution of the universe.

> "The rich man in his castle,
> The poor man at his gate—
> God made them, high and lowly,
> And ordered their estate."

During the last century such an acute division between the wealthy and the wage-earning classes has grown up, that the very foundations of modern industrial society are threatened. Very few of the rich have any conception how the poor live, and the feelings of bitterness and distrust in the minds of the "working-classes" grow every year more and more akin to those which preluded the sweeping away of the old regime at the time of the French Revolution. Revolution has been spreading in recent years on the Continent, and it is by no means an impossible danger in England. The distrust of the wealthy classes is enormous in many of the great trade unions, and it has only been the menace of the war that has so far averted calamity.

170. This suspicion and distrust has become not merely a political, but in many ways a religious, antagonism. The Church is regarded by many thinking people as one of the chief supporters of the

old regime, with its glaring inequalities; and as largely responsible, through its apathy and compromise with the world, for the situation of to-day. Thereby (the accusation runs) the Church has been unfaithful to the teaching of Christ, and while they acclaim Jesus as "the first democrat," they condemn the Church as being un-Christian and apostate. Nothing therefore needs more seriously to be faced to-day by the Church than the Christian attitude towards wealth.

171. (2) *The Conditions of To-day.* The student who desires to make himself acquainted with the conditions of to-day should read carefully one of the many studies in poverty that have been published in recent years. Charles Booth's *Life in London* led the way in this direction, and other books are such as Rowntree's *Poverty*—a study of town-life in York, and Shadwell's *Industrial Efficiency.* The superficial prosperity of the country is on all hands recognised to be only spurious and temporary, and unless radical measures are taken, the glaring inequalities of the past will only show themselves more markedly in the future. It is not possible yet for us to know exactly what changes the war has brought about. Meantime, the results of pre-war investigations may be taken as giving a fairly accurate view of the general conditions of the people.

172. The situation may not unfairly be summed up in the words of Mr. Sidney Webb: "We are in revolt," he says, "against the present inequality of circumstance—summed up in the fact that one-tenth of the population owns nine-tenths of the wealth, and that two-thirds of them—that is to say, the manual working-class—obtain for all their needs only one-third of the produce of each year's work. We see that this inequality means, to the multitude who are poor, maimed faculties and thwarted desires, unnecessary disease, and premature death, and in the worst cases, squalid bestiality and demoralisation of body and soul."

173. (3) *The Teaching of our Lord.* When we turn to the Gospels, we do not find that our Lord laid down any absolute rule for His disciples in relation to wealth. His call to the early disciples was to "forsake all, and

follow Him," and the Apostolic band may be said to have practised a modified communism during the period of our Lord's ministry. This temporary communal life for the purposes of the Ministry does not seem to have been complete, for after the Crucifixion we read that John took Mary to his own home, and the disciples from Galilee went back to their fishing on the lake, which seems to imply that they had not severed themselves altogether from their boats. The women who followed Jesus about from place to place and " ministered to Him of their substance," evidently did not give up all their private means, and a number of men, like Zaccheus, seem to have remained rich after they had become disciples. But though our Lord evidently laid down no rule of discipleship in this matter, there is no mistaking His teaching as to the " deceitfulness of riches, which choke the word, so that it becomes unfruitful " (Matt. xiii. 22). To the young ruler whose heart was entirely in his possessions he gave the command : " Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor," and when he was sad at that saying and went away grieved, Jesus said : " How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God " (Mark x. 21–25).

174. One cannot mistake the significance of the parables of the rich fool and of Dives and Lazarus (Luke xii. 20; xvi. 19), the calling of the poor, and not the rich, to the feast (Luke xiv. 13, 21), the opposition of the Pharisees, " who were covetous " (Luke xvi. 14), to His teaching on the impossibility of serving both God and mammon. St. Luke's Gospel particularly is full of this teaching on the danger of wealth (cp. i. 53; iii. 11; viii. 14; ix. 3; ix. 25; x. 4; xii. 15; xviii. 24; xxii. 5). It is evident that our Lord felt that simplicity of life, and even a measure of hardship, tended to quicken the inner faculties and give men a grip upon things unseen; whereas excessive wealth and worldly cares had the opposite effect.

175. (4) *Early Christian Teaching.* The communism of the early chapters of the Acts is best explained as an attempt on the part of the disciples

at Jerusalem to continue the life of the Apostolic band as when Jesus was with them. It seemed the most natural way of strengthening and consolidating the Church in Jerusalem for its mission. It was purely voluntary (Acts v. 4), and it seems to have been the superfluous things that were given up, rather than the abolition of all private property. We do not read that they sold those things that may be regarded as strictly personal, private property, but "as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and laid the money at the Apostles' feet" (Acts iv. 34–35). This point does not seem to have been generally noticed.

Another consideration that must be borne in mind is that the first generation of Christians expected our Lord to return in their own lifetime, and they would naturally, therefore, sit very loosely to property seeing that they believed the world was so soon to come to an end. This, however, does not affect the value of the ideal that they tried to attain. If the ideal be good, it must still abide as an object of effort; but it does at any rate affect our view as to what may be immediately practicable.

176. As the Church spread into other countries, we do not find that the Jerusalem system of complete surrender was anywhere else adopted. St. Paul himself did not adopt it (Acts xviii. 3; xx. 34; xxiv. 26), and his constant appeals for generosity towards the poor saints at Jerusalem show that no attempt was made to enforce the surrender of wealth; but the ideal of liberality remained the same: "That your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want; that there may be equality: as it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack" (2 Cor. viii. 14–15). This shows that while St. Paul did not advocate any systematic communism, his ideal was similar to that of the Christians at Jerusalem; and his teaching on the snare of riches in 1 Tim. vi. 6–11; Phil. iv. 11–19; Eph. v. 5, is as strong as anything in the Gospels.

Similar teaching may be found in Jas. ii. 2–6; v. 1–5; 1 Pet. iv. 8–10; 1 John iii. 17; iv. 20; Rev. iii. 17; xviii. 3–19.

177. In the Christian writings of the first three centuries there are some very strong expressions on the duties of the wealthy. In the *Shepherd* of Hermas the rich man is likened to a barren tree, who can only become fruitful by relying on the prayers of the poor whom he helps with his riches. In the *Apostolic Constitutions* rules are laid down as to how the Church should deal with gifts offered by extortioners and oppressors: "It is better to perish than to receive anything from the enemies of God." Tertullian says: "We who mingle in mind and soul have no hesitation as to fellowship in property." Cyprian, in whose days the gulf between rich and poor was becoming marked within the Church, looks longingly back to the brotherhood of earlier days. It was Clement of Alexandria (*c.* A.D. 190–203) who first showed that the possession of wealth was a good thing if it was used aright, but "the conditions," says Dr. Tollinton (*Clement of Alexandria*), "on which Clement was prepared to assert the rich man's title to Christian fellowship and ultimate salvation were probably far more difficult and exacting than those which are practically demanded by the Church in modern times." Towards the end of the third century the Church tended "more and more to be a counterpart of the world, with the same ranks, divisions, and distinctions; and the ardent soul is driven to seek a higher life under the shelter of the monastery." [1]

178. (5) *The Problem for To-day.* In the light of this teaching it cannot be seriously maintained that the conditions of society to-day can be justified by the principles of Christian morality. It would be far truer to say that the moral witness of the Church in general upon this subject has suffered a grievous declension. The ideal of the Church is clear, but it has been for the most part forgotten. If the Church

[1] "Christianity and Wealth," by G. W. Butterworth (*Church Quarterly Review*, January 1918).

is to take its part in the fashioning of that better order on which our generation has undoubtedly set its mind, it must set itself seriously to the task of reviving its own ideals within its own borders, or find its own power for good slowly ebbing away. "What will be needed is a willingness to surrender any privilege or comfort, if by so doing a better spiritual life in the widest sense of the term may be brought within the reach of all. And if the Church will set herself seriously to the task of inspiring with her own high ideals the society of the future, we cannot doubt that she will be able without difficulty to suggest a thousand different ways in which her rich members, by the methods best suited to their own times, may imitate not unworthily the unbounded self-sacrifice which marked the men of the heroic age." [1]

179. *Commerce and Industry*—(1) *Its Use and Methods.* As we approach the methods by which the wealth of the country is made, it is necessary to realise at the outset that commerce and industry are necessary and beneficial. By industry we mean the provision of food, heat, light, and clothing, and all the needs of the human household. Commerce is the method of the distribution of this provision. This is the idea at the root of the word "economics"—"the laws of the household." Political economy is the study of the methods of providing for the needs of the family of the State, just as domestic economy is the method of providing for the family of the home. It should be noticed that here again, by the very language we use, the ideal and principles of the family are carried forward to the wider sphere of the State.

180. It would be very easy to rhapsodise about the marvellous results of human industry and skill, the shrewdness and forethought of the business man, the wonderful way in which, like a prudent housewife, he brings to our tables the products of the whole world for our needs and delight. There is a romance and a charm of marvellous adventure about commerce that may

[1] *Ibid.*

well make us pause in thankfulness before we analyse too closely its methods. But we must not be so led away by our admiration of the business man, as to think that there are not many things in the business world that from time to time need overhauling. Defective arrangements in trade may cause serious overlapping and waste, schemes of distribution may be bad, so that some are hungry while others have surfeit; uneven distribution of labour may mean that some are over-burdened while others go idle; the very complexity of the machinery may bear hard upon the weak, or become oppressive and irritating even to the strong. Good political management, or true political economy, will mean that all these points are taken into consideration, for though on a much wider scale than the family, we still have to deal with human beings, our brothers and sisters, and they must be dealt with on a human, and not merely a mechanical basis. If it is true that morality must cover the whole of life, it is incumbent upon us continually to examine business from a moral standpoint, and ask how far it may have departed from its true method, and how far it is keeping to the first principles of its existence—the supply of human needs.

181. (2) *Abuses.* When we bring human criticism to bear on the business world, we begin to find numberless abuses that have become so ingrained in our habits as to seem to many necessary to the very existence of trade; but when they are examined they are seen to be rather the chief hindrances to the common weal and happiness. No one can say that when once a fault is observed and recognised, human ingenuity cannot remedy that which human arrangements have made. It is our business as men to make our arrangements as perfect as possible for human happiness. If anything that we do creates an atmosphere of bitterness and ill-will, it is our duty to find out what is wrong.

182. The main criticism of to-day centres round the principle of competition. It is not needed in a family, nor a school, or institution, however large and

complex. Emulation is quite a different thing. And as families grow into clans and tribes and nations, so the spirit of co-operation for the common good should grow with the extending boundaries of rule. Competition appears to be the relic in trade of the old idea of external animosities, whether of tribe against tribe, or nation against nation. It is the parallel of tribal war, the last relic of the blood-feud, the last abode (apart from war) of barbarism and lawlessness. In a well-ordered nation, private revenge, duelling, internecine strife, have been superseded by ever wider and better methods of law. The spirit of these things still persists in our affairs of trade. The result is to be seen in the appalling state of things revealed in the statistics of wealth, and in the unrest of the labouring classes. The State has been almost rent asunder by the licence given to the disintegrating spirit of almost unfettered competition.

183. In the days of the small business it was possible for the employer to preserve something of the human touch in his dealings with the employed, and the people were fairly contented. Those days have gone. The personal employer has given way to the shareholders of huge companies, who know little of the workers by whom their dividends are made. The work in a great establishment is split up into a thousand minute and mechanical jobs, so that the worker scarcely knows very often what he is making. The work is monotonous and uninteresting. The workers are so many "hands," and the employers are "boards"; and the profits go to invisible shareholders who seem to control all the tentacles by which a man's life is bound. It is the utter lack of the human touch in modern business that makes it so soul-destroying both for the worker and the holder of capital, and that has caused the consolidated suspicion and revolt of the great trade unions, with their endless threats of strike and upheaval.

184. Twenty years ago it was possible for a writer in the *Spectator* to say: "The competitive struggle has many drawbacks, but at least it produces men,

and it is men we want to make, not great associations of consumers of food." If the production of men is to be the test of a system, surely this is the very condemnation to-day of the competitive system, for it is not a maker of men, but of human machines and money; and it is the spirit of association that we need in society, whether in the production of food, or in the realm of government.

185. (3) *Reforms.* The results of the unlimited competition of the last hundred years are what we see them to-day—revolution, civil disturbances, and, on the international scale, war; for the Great War was undoubtedly far more a result of vicious economics than of racial animosity. What the Christian Church must do to-day is to insist on the application of the principles of mutual service, co-operation, brotherhood, membership one with another, to every department of trade. The Report of the Archbishops' Committee on *Christianity and Industrial Problems*, 1918, shows a number of the reforms on which there would be fairly general agreement among the leaders of the Church.

186. *The Necessity of Public Spirit.* But while we are naturally interested in the details of particular reforms, we must not forget that Christian morality goes deeper. It must keep principles and ideals in view, and seek to win over the heart and conscience of the nation. Its ideal is the brotherhood of man, the Kingdom of God; and a Christian must not allow himself to become so absorbed in the machinery of external detail, that he forgets that principles lie at the root of all human action. A nation cannot become part of the Kingdom of God by mere Act of Parliament. Its politics will reflect its spirit. The statesman who sees deepest into the springs of the national life must therefore seek to create the public spirit, the true patriotism, by which the nation will seek to live in unity, and it is this spirit that the Christian moralist must first of all seek to implant in the hearts of the nation.

The spirit that seeks the common good must supplant

the spirit of individual self-seeking, and we claim that it is only as the principles of Christian morality are pursued—justice, mercy, consideration for the weak, unity—that the State really can become welded together into a united nation. This is the pathway of social salvation; and just as Christianity alone can build up a strong character in the individual, so Christian principles alone avail to produce a noble and happy citizenship.

187. *International Peace.* But the social salvation that Christianity dreams of cannot end with the individual State. It is founded on the solidarity of mankind as all members of the one family of God. It does not decry patriotism any more than it depreciates family affection. These are the nearest spheres of duty, and are included in the greater loyalty. But religion by its very nature transcends patriotism, and in our days the economic and political exigencies of the times, and the new discoveries of scientific possibilities, have all come in to reinforce the religious ideal. Where love has been powerless, fear is driving the nations to the same end. It is significant that the new League of Nations has been forced upon us by the fear of the possibilities of another world-war, by the necessity of an international labour charter, by the wave-defying aeroplane, and the horrors of poison gas. So it is always in God's world; where we fail in love, we are forced through fear.

There is need in the future of wise politicians and statesmen to show how the gulf between the nations can be bridged, but there is far more need of idealists and visionaries who are able to discern the signs of the times and the path of future progress. Leagues and treaties will be of no avail unless there is a new spirit in the nations, aiming not at the old narrow aggrandisements of the past, but at new methods of law, justice, consideration, and mutual service. In essence the nations are one, but their inherent oneness has yet to find concrete expression; and it is in the creation of the desire for world-peace, and in the assiduous study by all men of good-will to find

the way of peace, that the world will go forward to the attainment of its true goal.

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CHAPTER XV

THE CHURCH

188. *The Aim of the Church.* If it is true that the spirit of society is the all-important thing, and that no number of laws can make the State into an instrument of the Kingdom of God if the right aim is not increasingly making itself manifest, then the importance of a Church becomes clear. Every idealist who has looked forward to a better state of society has realised the importance of some kind of Church. This necessity, for instance, is fully realised in *God the Invisible King*, by Mr. H. G. Wells. For what is a Church in essence? It is a society of those who are seeking the ideal; and the Christian Church is the society of those who believe that the ideal is synonymous with the Kingdom of God as revealed by Jesus Christ. The Church, therefore, is the company of the seers of the race. By its very nature it is the reforming, visionary, idealistic spirit of humanity. Its mission is to be the forerunner of the Kingdom. Primarily, its work is not mere alleviation of sufferings or wrongs, or preoccupation with the details of life. These things are useful as incidentals in its mission, but the Church loses its proper character if it is regarded as a mere social rescue agency or political instrument. Its business is to lay bare the principles of progress, to point the way to the social reformers and politicians, to press onwards to the goal. It should always be the pioneer and leader in all movements that tend to the well-being of the race, but its business is with the soul of progress rather than with the details, with the principles of society, not the slow approximations of law.

189. *Church and State.* Hence it is impossible to make the Church and State absolutely conterminous. It can only be to the detriment of the State if it ceases to recognise the Church as the society within its own borders that is working for its ultimate welfare. But the State must realise that the Church must be free to do its own work. It should be as the soul within the body—the inspirer, director, admonisher—and to do this work the Church cannot be tied down as the mere servant of the State. It must have liberty at times to refuse to allow the necessarily laxer laws of the State to be the standard of its own members. The Church must have liberty to exalt its own standards higher than those of the ordinary mass of citizens who are not prepared to accept the Christian standard.

The whole subject of the relations between Church and State is extraordinarily important and complicated. It has certainly not been found wise in the past to allow the Church supreme control in the State. The ideals of Hildebrand in the Middle Ages have been shown to be utterly impracticable, but the reaction at the Reformation to purely State-controlled Churches has also been shown to be a mistake if a Church is to have any real influence. The aim of statesmanship in the future is to find a way in which the closest partnership between the Church and State can be preserved, while at the same time the Church shall be free to develop its own interior life.

190. *The Evangelisation of the World.* The Christian Church cannot be limited in its outlook. We have followed the social ideal of Christianity until we saw how it must transcend all national boundaries and find a way of linking all nations into a federation for the common good. This ideal has been latent in Christianity from the beginning. It is the logical issue of the missionary ideal. Even when the nations in their political aspect have been rigorously exclusive, the missionaries, with their faith in the world-wide Kingdom of God, have gone out to preach the one Father of mankind, the one Saviour, and the one Spirit. To them there has been neither Jew nor Gentile, neither

bond nor free, neither male nor female. The walls of partition have been broken down by their proclamation that "all are one in Christ Jesus." All this has been the spiritual preparation for the new era as yet seen only by faith. But we are living in the times when this new spirit is seeking to find for itself concrete expression. The League of Nations is but the logical issue of the preaching of Pentecost. The world at large has at last begun to realise the value of the Christian ideal. But that ideal has had to work its way slowly into the hearts of men before it could be realised in its epoch-making power.

191. This is only another way of saying that the Church, like the individual Christian, lives by faith and not by sight. The aim of the Church is greater than can be compassed by any schemes of men. It regulates the interior lives of individuals and of all society. Its salvation is as wide as humanity. And to touch humanity it has to dig deep into the souls of men, and to treat man as the child of the Eternal before it can really influence his movements in time.

If there is any truth in the pragmatic philosophy, this would prove the truth of the Christian faith, in that it is only by that faith, as a matter of fact, that the world does reach its highest ideals. Christianity does work; and that at least reinforces our belief that it is true. Dr. Robertson Smith says: "God's Revelation of Himself is unfolded gradually in constant contact with the needs of religious life. Every word of God is spoken for all time, but every word none the less was first spoken to a present necessity of God's people," and its truth is still endorsed because it meets a present necessity.[1]

192. *The Present Condition of the Church.* But, alas, *corruptio optimi pessima.* It is not always easy to see in the Church as it exists to-day the ideal Church as we have seen it in our vision, so often do the tares seem to obscure the wheat. In place of that society of twice-born souls who have seen the Kingdom from

[1] W. Robertson Smith, *Old Testament* (2nd ed.), p. 99. Quoted in Cunningham's *Secret of Progress*, p. 13.

afar, we too often find the Church very little distinct from the surrounding world, its light bedimmed, its witness uncertain, its salt savourless. So difficult is it to find a true Church that some have thought the existence of the Church can only be reckoned a matter of faith—that no visible body can be the Church as our Lord saw it, that the real Church must be an invisible, spiritual body only. But this was certainly not the way in which the Apostles thought of the Church. In the New Testament the Church was certainly reckoned as a definite body of believers, though already we find it was becoming a very mixed company, in which not all were to be accounted as worthy of their high calling.

193. The difficulty of keeping the Church pure from unworthy elements has been felt in every age. The Catholic ideal has been to keep the Church as wide as possible, remembering what our Lord said about the tares, but it has usually made up for elasticity in morals by strictness of dogmatic profession. The Puritans of all ages have tried hard to keep the Church pure, and have usually become both narrow in dogma and bigoted in morals. Then the Church has varied in character greatly according to its relations with the State. In times of persecution it has been strong and zealous, though few in numbers. When it has weathered the storms of persecution, it has grown in numbers, but diminished in strength and zeal; or it has grown dominating, and itself become the persecutor. No one desires to-day the recurrence of State persecutions or the methods of the Inquisition; but, on the other hand, we do not desire to return to the palmy days of the State Church, when the clergy slept comfortably in their livings and seemed to care nothing for anything but their emoluments, or veered with every wind of the State, like the famous Vicar of Bray.

194. *Divisions in the Church.* Since the sixteenth century the Church has been split into numberless sections, each at times very bitter against the other. It may be that, in spite of all this bitterness and con-

troversy, though there has been enormous waste of energy, yet the cause of Christianity has gone forward, and become enriched by its experience and experiments.

Every section of the Church acknowledges to-day that there has been real loss, errors on all sides, much that was not Christian; but it is no use to-day regretting or trying to undo the past, or simply raking up afresh the dead controversies of our fathers. Every denomination to-day acknowledges that there has been some good in the opposite party. The Quaker has enriched our faith by his quiet mystical apprehension of the truth; the Wesleyan taught us the value of enthusiasm, the Congregationalist the priesthood of the laity, the Baptist the value of individual witness. There are not many Protestants now who regard the Church of Rome as synonymous with the Great Whore; we know that it has been from all time the home of saints and the preserver of great traditions. The Church of England has stood for the preservation of national faith, and the renunciation of the Roman assumption of supremacy over kings. So the Eastern Churches have preserved intact many things which in the days to come will be found valuable by a united Church.

195. It is not for any of us to cast a slur upon the work that other Churches have done, or to argue indefinitely about questions of the validity of orders or sacraments. The ultimate test of a Church is the possession of the Spirit of God. "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us, what was I, that I could withstand God?" (Acts xi. 17). "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good-will: the one preach Christ of contention, but the other of love. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice" (Phil. i. 15–19). It is for us in our days to accept what has been done by the Holy Spirit in the ages past, and seek to strengthen the whole Church of God for the accomplishment of its mission in the future. How this can best be done is

one of the great tasks that lie immediately in front of the ecclesiastical statesmen of our time.

196. *Reunion.* The Church of to-day is keenly exercised on the whole question of union. It is being increasingly felt that the Church should find a method of healing its divisions, and giving a united witness to the world; but it is not yet quite clear what is to be the basis of its unity, whether creeds, or morals, or organisation. If morality alone were taken as the basis, it might mean that Christianity would tend to become divorced from thought; some statement of belief seems necessary if Christianity is to be able to state its philosophy to the world. Whether that creed could be so simple as the mere confession of one's belief that "Jesus is the Lord" (1 Cor. xii. 3), as advocated by some, is doubtful in view of the heresy controversies of the past. As regards organisation, it would appear as if some form of episcopacy were winning its way to general approval, though it is probable that modifications would have to be introduced into episcopacy as we know it, before it would meet with the approval of the present non-episcopal bodies.

197. Certain principles need to be hammered out before any large degree of unity can be attained:

1. The necessity of historical continuity.
2. A minimum moral standard.
3. A simple yet adequate profession of faith.
4. The combination of certain recognised forms of worship with elasticity.

Agreement on these points can only be reached slowly, by growth of mutual knowledge and trust. But there is no reason why approximations towards unity should not be made, before any more definite corporate union can be attained. Perhaps, after all, there can be no perfect union till the Kingdom comes, "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. iv. 13).

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